

Jordan reaffirms commitment to development, rights of children

AMMAN (J.T.) — United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) Area Representative in Jordan Victoria Rialp met at Ma'wa Palace with Her Majesty Queen Noor Tuesday to launch the yearly UNICEF publication of State of the World's Children — 1995, which examines the progress of the world community in meeting the 1990 World Summit for Children goals to provide children with better health, sanitation, education and the full opportunity to grow and develop.

In presenting the report to Queen Noor, Mrs. Rialp commended Jordan's achievements saying: "We in UNICEF are proud and feel privileged to find in the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan a community of strong, committed and competent partners, on both official and non-governmental levels. Within our programme of cooperation, we are pleased to note Jordan's substantial achievements along all the goals set by the World Summit for Children and described in the report."

Mrs. Rialp added: "We see children and youth as active participants and prime movers in setting some of the more important directions that development should and will take in the country."

Queen Noor, who represented Jordan at the 1990 World Summit for Children, responded with the following statement:

"It is a great privilege for me to participate in the launching of UNICEF's 1995 State of the World's Children report — a document that provides a global view of the progress made since the 1990 World Summit for Children to improve the quality of life for children throughout the world. On behalf of Jordanian children and their families, I would like to express our sincere appreciation to UNICEF for its extraordinarily effective work on behalf of children everywhere.

The impressive and encouraging progress noted in this report reflects in no small measure your perseverance and commitment to your partnerships worldwide. We in Jordan are proud of our achievements and deeply appreciate your ongoing commitment to our cooperative efforts to ensure that they are the foundation for continuing and increasingly dynamic progress.

"The report is encouraging as it suggests that most of the goals set by the 1990 summit for 1995 are likely to be met by the majority of developing nations. Such progress means that approximately 2.5 million fewer children will die in 1996 than in 1990, and that at least three quarters of a million fewer children each year will be disabled, blinded, crippled, or mentally retarded.

"The report emphasises the need to direct the international community's attention to the acute suffering of children in areas plagued by war and hunger such as Iraq, Palestine and Somalia, and to find the resources and political will necessary to meet the needs of children in every country in this region. It also urges countries to redirect resources from military uses to investment in development.

"In Jordan, we have been committed to human development, to the rights of children, to the education of women and to the equitable distribution of the benefits of development to all sectors of our community. Jordan ratified the Convention on the Rights of the Child in May 1991. Our commitment to the rights and well-being of children was further reflected in the National Conference for Children held in 1992, addressed by His Majesty the King and which adopted a strategy for child development.

"We have made significant progress towards meeting

many of the mid-decade goals. We have achieved an immunisation coverage rate for five immunisable diseases, well above the mid-decade target of 80 per cent. Neonatal tetanus has not been a major concern, as there were only five neonatal cases in 1994. With regards to reducing measles-related deaths, Jordan succeeded in achieving this goal and no such cases were reported in the past two years. While the percentage of oral rehydration therapy use had reached little over 20 per cent in 1986, Jordan has now surpassed the summit goal of achieving 80 per cent usage of rehydration therapy to help manage diarrhoeal diseases.

"Jordan still has many goals that need to be met. To encourage Jordanian mothers to breast feed, public and military hospitals in Jordan have stopped distributing low-cost breast milk substitutes, but this has yet to be implemented in private hospitals. The current status of vitamin A deficiency in Jordan is not known, but survey will be conducted in early 1995. With the help of UNICEF, Jordan is addressing a serious problem resulting from lack of iodised salt in the Kingdom. According to a 1993 national survey, the incidence of goiter among school children was about 38 per cent, and with the occurrence of other serious diseases associated with the lack of iodised salts, the crucial needs for a salt iodisation programme was clearly indicated. The Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Trade and Industry are planning the introduction of legislative changes requiring salt iodisation. By early next year Jordan will be producing and distributing iodised salts. Other areas that also need to be focused on are gender disparities throughout our society, and supporting efforts by UNICEF, UNDP and UNRWA to address the

particular problems of Palestinian refugees in the region.

"The report is UNICEF's contribution to the 1995 Copenhagen World Summit for Social Development. The summit's new strategy for international development will have to give priority to protecting and investing in the physical, mental and emotional well-being of children. However, there is little evidence of any restriction in aid in support of improvements in nutrition, primary health care, and basic education. We have seen instead a fall in overall aid levels. Today, the average industrialised nation gives 0.29 per cent of its GNP in aid to the developing world, the lowest per cent contribution in the last twenty years.

In partnership with UNICEF, Jordan was able to achieve considerable progress within a short period and we hope to continue working closely together to fulfill our future goals."

In the discussion that followed, Minister of Health Aref Bataineh spoke about UNICEF's cooperation with the ministry in providing low-cost vaccines to treat viral hepatitis which affects seven per cent of children in Jordan. Dr. Bataineh also discussed the government's efforts to move beyond the issue of survival and promote a better quality of life for children.

Dr. Hisham Al Khatib, minister of planning, emphasised the relationship between early childhood education and development and the productivity and dynamism of the society. He cited early childhood development as an area in which more investment and effort should be concentrated.

The meeting was attended by Mrs. Iman Muflih, development advisor to Queen Noor and Dr. Sima Bahous, information and communication officer at UNICEF.

Heavy fighting in Mogadishu

MOGADISHU (AFP) — Rival sub-clans battled with heavy weapons in the streets of Mogadishu on Wednesday and witnesses and hospitals reported at least seven killed and 126 wounded since the fighting broke out.

No ceasefire agreement was in sight late Wednesday afternoon despite efforts by elders to broker an accord.

Stray fire was coming into the sprawling U.N. compound, where around 13,000 troops are bunkered down, preparing to pull out of this lawless country by March 31 following the failure of warlords to agree on a government of national unity.

U.N. military spokesman Zubair Chattha said no U.N. personnel had been wounded, and that no U.N. troops were involved in the latest fighting, which began before dawn on Tuesday.

He said the militias of the Murasade and Abgal factions of the Hawiye clan were using mortars, recoilless rifles, rocket-propelled grenades and 14.5-kilometre guns as well as small-arms in the Medina and Bernuda districts of south Mogadishu.

Residents have been fleeing.

A mortar shell landed Tuesday at the airport, which is controlled by U.N. troops, but did not explode.

The celebration of ancestral rites, with the astonishing and easy dance of the der-



ANTI-SANCTIONS PROTEST: A Palestinian youth shouts and waves his fist during a demonstration staged on Tuesday in Baghdad to protest against the continuation of U.N. sanctions against Iraq. The Iraqi government has

decided to maintain rationing of staple foods next year, the fifth year of rationing since the United Nations imposed sanctions on Baghdad (AFP photo)

NEWS IN BRIEF

Egyptian lawyers harassed — group

CAIRO (AFP) — Egyptian lawyers are victims of state harassment while performing their duties, the Egyptian Human Rights Organisation said Tuesday. "The fact that numerous infringements have been committed against lawyers and human rights activists by security agents and the attorney general's services is a clear sign that human rights in Egypt have sunk to a very low level," a report by the organisation said. "Protection of human rights and basic freedoms means that every individual is able to get appropriate legal help from independent professional lawyers," the report added. The organisation gave as examples of harassment "long waits at prison gates, body searches on entry and exit, and sometimes confiscation of personal papers." "In some jails, lawyers must have their hands stamped, which is humiliating, and if they refuse they are insulted. Private meetings with clients are forbidden and take place generally in the officer's office, and waits rarely last longer than 10 minutes," the report said. "In some jails, lawyers stand one metre (yard) away from their clients because of barbed wire separating them which means they cannot hear each other."

U.S. issues Afghan travel advisory

WASHINGTON (AFP) — The United States issued a travel advisory for flights over Afghanistan Tuesday and warned that the ongoing hostilities there would prevent search and rescue operations for crash victims. A State Department statement said that though the U.S. aviation administration had banned U.S. aircraft from flying over the country, many foreign air carriers continue to do so over Afghanistan on routes between Asia and Europe. The statement said the International Civil Aviation Organisation has warned that there is no reliable communication with Kabul air traffic control. "Should an air disaster occur in Afghanistan, adjacent countries would most likely become aware only when an aircraft failed to enter the country," said the statement. "Moreover, any search and rescue efforts cannot be expected as it is not possible for neighbouring states to obtain permission to enter Afghanistan in search of the survivors," it said.

Rights group concerned over Algerian activist

WASHINGTON (AFP) — A human rights group expressed concern Tuesday about the welfare of Algerian activist Salafeddine Sidhoum, who has been threatened and intimidated after giving interviews to foreign journalists. Human Rights Watch Middle East, in a letter to President

Lamine Zeroual, said armed men came to his home this week and threatened to kill his aunt if she did not tell them his whereabouts. The organisation said it feared the incident was related to Dr. Sidhoum's remarks criticising the government for human rights abuses in a BBC report aired on French television. "If there are reasons why Dr. Sidhoum is being sought by the authorities, Human Rights Watch would appreciate being informed of those reasons," the letter said. "If he is not being sought, we request that you investigate the incident."

U.S. aid rewards peace efforts — Egypt

CAIRO (AFP) — Billions of dollars in U.S. aid to Egypt is not given for free but in return for Cairo's efforts to bring about peace in the Middle East, a senior official said here Tuesday. "The United States provides aid to Egypt because it is contributing to the realisation of U.S. interests in the region, namely achieving peace in the Middle East," Osama Al Baz, political advisor to President Hosni Mubarak, said. "The proof is that this aid was only decided on after Egypt signed peace with Israel in 1979." Dr. Baz told a university conference, quoted by the official agency MENA. Egypt is the second largest recipient of U.S. aid after Israel, getting \$2.2 billion annually, out of which \$1.3 billion is for the military and \$815 million for civilian purposes. Dr. Baz also highlighted "the need to eliminate all weapons of mass destruction, chemical and nuclear, and to set up a body for security in the region."

Fateh faction wins student elections

GAZA CITY (AFP) — Yasser Arafat's main Fateh faction has won student elections at Al Azhar University taking all nine seats on the students' union, a daily paper said Wednesday. Fateh won 76 per cent of the vote in Tuesday's vote, the Islamic Resistance Movement (Hamas), took 14 per cent and the Islamic Jihad 1 per cent. Pro-leftist groups won four per cent of the vote, which had a 65 per cent turnout. A delegation of the students from the university met with Mr. Arafat late Tuesday and pledged their support. They promised to "carry on the path until the establishment of the state of Palestine with Jerusalem as its capital," the daily Arabic-language Al Quds said. Al Azhar University, attached to the Cairo-based mosque and theological institute by the same name, was a college unit two years ago. Its 2,742 students are mostly pro-Fateh, which also won the first elections in 1993. Hamas had a sweeping victory in elections at the Islamic University, the largest on the self-rule Gaza Strip, earlier this month.

Dervishes maintain centuries of tradition

KONYA, Turkey (AFP) — To the accompaniment of a Persian chant centuries old, a score of men in white robes and tall thimble-shaped hats spin round and round untiringly, eyes closed, arms stretched out like a cross.

They are whirling dervishes, who meet here each year in December for a week's commemoration of the death of their sect's founder Mohammed Celaleddin Rumi on Dec. 17.

Also known as Mevlana (master), Rumi founded the sect here in the former capital of the Seljuk Turks, which nowadays has a strong Islamic fundamentalist influence.

The long white robe opens out like a flower's petals. The dancer stop suddenly the moment the music does, not a stumble among them, abso-

lutely no sign of dizziness.

The feat is all the more

amazing for being performed

in a highly unlikely setting for

religious ecstasy — the

baseball court in a gymnasium,

with several thousand specta-

tors up in the stands.

Fatih, 33, explained how

the dancers these days com-

bine membership of the

brotherhood with almost

ordinary lives and a job.

He is married and is a

musician by profession. Neatly bearded, wearing a leather jacket and jeans, he puffed furiously on an American cigarette.

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INTER-CONTINENTAL JORDAN

Christmas Calendar of Events

Christmas Eve

... we have planned for our chefs as a special menu. Enjoy your dinner at El-Pasha Nightclub or at Ol' 2 Restaurant. Both menus at JD 14.000 ++

Christmas Day

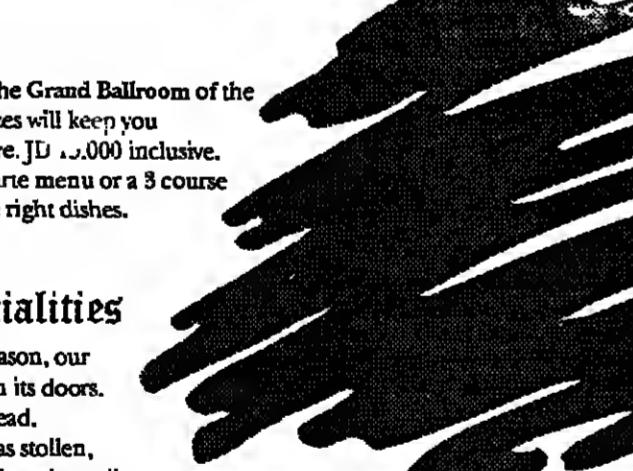
... we have planned for our chefs as a special menu. Enjoy your dinner at El-Pasha Nightclub or at Ol' 2 Restaurant. Both menus at JD 14.000 ++

Christmas Specialities

Throughout the Christmas season, our Ginger Bread House will open its doors. A wide selection of Ginger bread, Christmas puddings, Christmas stollen, cakes and chocolates will be for sale until December 26th.

For turkey orders with all the traditional trimmings kindly contact the B&B office, 48 hours in advance.

For reservations, please call 641361. Food & Beverage or The Box Office



JORDAN TIMES DAILY GUIDE AND CALENDAR

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

NIGHT DUTY

AMMAN:	Dr. Iman Al Asmar 098504

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Home News

Islamists warn Yeltsin of Chechenya conflict

AMMAN (J.T.) — The Islamic Action Front (IAF) party Wednesday sent a message to Russian President Boris Yeltsin urging Russia to end its military intervention in Chechenya and stressing that armed conflict was bound to damage the interests of both the Russian and Chechen peoples.

The message, sent via the Russian ambassador to Jordan, said the IAF hopes Moscow would re-examine its position towards the Chechen republic and end the armed conflict which only deepens hatred between the two sides.

The IAF members of the Jordanian Parliament, acting from the religious links with the Chechen people and out of belief of the Chechens' right to self determination and with a view to ensuring the continuation of the good relations between your country and the Arab and the Islamic World hope that the military attack on the Chechen republic would be immediately halted," said the message.

The message said that the conflict was bound to trigger a long war of attrition with the two peoples of Russia and Chechenya paying a heavy price similar to the situations that resulted from the conflicts in Afghanistan and Vietnam.

Nothing that Russia is numerically and militarily far stronger than the Chechen republic, the IAF statement said that these were not sufficient elements for deciding the outcome of the conflict. The Chechens have a just

cause and enjoy the sympathy and support of the world and that renders any military victory futile in restoring peace and security to the region, the message stressed.

The IAF members of Parliament in Jordan do not accept the Russian determination to retain the Chechen republic within the Russian Federation against its people's wishes and do not wish to see Russia ruling the Chechen area after devastating it and obliterating its people. It is therefore more sensible for Russia to halt the war and direct the funds being spent on it towards improving the economic conditions of the Russian people," said the statement.

The statement reminded the Russian president of the fact that Russia was keen on maintaining strong ties with the Arab and Islamic World based on mutual respect and that this fact ought to prompt Russia to listen to the call of reason and wisdom and open serious negotiations that would ensure the right of the Chechen people to self-determination.

The IAF statement said that the Russian attack can only be interpreted as an act of colonisation, "motivated by the lust for imposing oppression on the weak nations."

The Jordanian government Tuesday deplored the current events in the Chechen area as tragic urging the warring parties to settle their dispute through peaceful means.

Tourism minister honours tourist police officers

AMMAN (Petra) — The Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities Wednesday honoured a number of tourist police officers during a ceremony, held at the ministry, attended by Minister Mohammad Adwan and senior Public Security Department (PSD) officers.

Tourist police play a key role in reflecting the image of Jordan to the outside world; through the visitors to the country, and also in ensuring the success of the tourist industry in the Kingdom, said the minister at the ceremony.

The honouring of the officers reflects the country's appreciation of their vital service to the nation," added Dr. Adwan who presented the ministry's shields to Brigadier Adel Arnouti, Colonel Mohammad Roussan, Captain Majed Masaad, and Lieutenant Mohammad Omari, all from the PSD.

In a separate development Wednesday the minister of tourism received at his office a delegation of Chinese journalists and briefed them on the development of tourism industry in the Kingdom and the promotional activities over the last few years.

Dr. Adwan said Jordan was looking forward to closer cooperation with China in touristic affairs.

The journalists, who are here at the invitation of the Jordan Press Association (JPA), have already visited the Nabataean city of Petra and other archaeological sites and pledged to write articles about their experiences in Jordan in the Chinese press.

JPA Director Fakhri Abu Hamdeh was present at the meeting.

WHAT'S GOING ON

The following listings are compiled from monthly bulletins and the daily Arabic press. Readers are advised to verify the listed time and place with the concerned institutions.

FRANCO-ARAB CINEMA FESTIVAL

★ Film entitled "The Lost Necklace of the Dove" (Tunisia, France/Italy 1991) at Cinema Concorde on Thursday at 8:30 p.m. Also showing another film entitled "Curfew" (Palestine/Holland 1993) on Friday at 8:30 p.m.

FILMS

★ Children's film (in French) entitled "Le Capitain" at the French Cultural Centre on Thursday at 10:00 a.m.
★ Film entitled "Alice in Wonderland" at the American Center on Thursday at 5:00 p.m.
★ Film entitled "Mujeres Al Borde De Un Ataque De Nervios" at Instituto Cervantes (The Spanish Cultural Centre) on Thursday at 4:00 p.m.

CONCERT

★ Concert (supervised by Ms. Irine Kilani) at the Phoenix Gallery for Culture and Art on Thursday at 8:00 p.m.

CHRISTMAS DISPLAY

★ Bani Hamida Christmas Display with a variety of small gift items at Bani Hamida House, Jabal Amman, First Circle, Rainbow Street.

POETRY RECITAL

★ Poetry recital by poets Abbas Jijan and Ali Kilani at the Jordan Engineers Association on Thursday at 6:00 p.m.

EXHIBITIONS

★ Plastic art exhibition by Laila Kawash at the Royal Cultural Centre.
★ Exhibition of paintings on leather by Iraqi artist Rakan Dabdub at the Phoenix Gallery for Culture and Art.
★ Painting and water colours exhibition by Suhail Ma'touq at Baladna Art Gallery.
★ Art exhibition by Ammar Khammash and Fuad Mimi at Instituto Cervantes (The Spanish Cultural Centre).
★ Exhibition of works by Mahmud Obsidi at Darat Al Funun. Also showing an exhibition of portraits by Fahrelnissa Zeid and the exhibition of contemporary Arab artists.
★ Exhibition of paintings by Ismail and Tamam Shamamot at Abdul Hameed Shoman Foundation.
★ Exhibition of paintings by Sadik Kwaish at the French Cultural Centre.
★ Exhibition by artists Latif Al Khateeb and Muhy Khaleda at the Housing Bank Gallery.

Israeli human rights lawyer ends visit, says Arabs should not normalise unless occupation ends

By Natasha Bukhari
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Israeli human rights lawyer Lea Tsismel, who Wednesday ended a three-day visit to Jordan, says that she is against normalisation of Arab-Israeli relations if it means "normalisation of Israeli occupation."

Ms. Tsismel, 50, is well-known for defending Palestinians against what she described as "the arbitrary rules of the Israeli occupation" and has for over twenty years represented hundreds of Palestinians in Israeli prison camps charged with different offences.

Ms. Tsismel's clients include members of the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO), Hamas resistance movement and Al Jihad Al Islam, she revealed.

"I will take on any case

that is an outcome of the Israeli occupation of Palestine."

Ms. Tsismel told the Jordan Times in an interview, adding that her visit to Jordan was prompted by the fact that "there are so many Palestinians in Jordan" who require her services.

Thousands of Palestinians

have been denied entry to the West Bank after their exit-and-return permits were expired, and the Israeli authorities have refused countless applications for Palestinian family reunification permits.

During her stay in the Kingdom, the lawyer took a number of cases related to "Palestinians' right of return" to the occupied West Bank, and gave free consultations on the legal status of tens of other deported Palestinians, she said.

Ms. Tsismel, who lives in Jerusalem, said that she has always wanted to come to Jordan and help Palestinians here but that as

an Israeli, visiting an enemy country would have been regarded as an offence to her, she said in explaining the timing of the visit.

The Jordanian-Israeli peace treaty enables me to be in direct contact with my clients here," she said, adding that before the accord contact with many of her deported clients in Jordan was done through their relatives in the West Bank.

Jordan and Israel signed a peace treaty ending a 46-year state of war between them on Oct. 26. Under the accord, the two sides recognised that the "human problems caused by the conflict in the Middle East cannot be fully resolved on the bilateral level" and that the parties will solve them in accordance with international law in a "quadrilateral committee together with Egypt and the Palestinians" in the case of displaced persons, and "in the framework to be agreed, bilateral or otherwise, in conjunction with and at the same time as the permanent status negotiations (Israeli-Palestinian) pertaining to the territories" in the case of refugees.

But some Palestinians attacked the Kingdom's treaty with Israel saying that it fell short of addressing the issue of Palestinian refugees and displaced persons and that Jordan has abandoned their cause moving towards normalising ties with Israel which continues to occupy Arab land.

Asked if she was against normalising Arab-Israeli ties, Ms. Tsismel said that she opposed "normalising occupation" and that "everything in the field of normalising ties with Israel should be carefully examined" to avoid "eternalisation of occupation."

She said that she was optimistic that the Palestinian-Israeli limited self-rule accord reached in April "could be the frame for further development and achievement for the Palestinian people whom she said were "experienced with the occupation and would take care that the Palestine Liberation Organisa-

tion (PLO) would bring them back their rights."

Meanwhile, negotiations between Jordanians, Palestinians, Israelis, and Egyptians over displaced and refugee Palestinians are underway for the purpose of attaining an Israeli recognition of Palestinians' right of return.

Jordanian officials Tuesday told the Associated Press (AP) that Jordan has asked Israel to allow the repatriation of 80,000 Palestinians who were denied entry to the Israeli occupied territories because of expired exit-and-return permits.

Head of the refugee committee for talks with Israel, Marwan Dudi said that he presented the Israeli authorities with a list of 6,250 names to be allowed into the occupied territories and that the Israelis approved the request "in principle" but no formal reply to that effect has yet materialised.

But despite the heavy criticism Ms. Tsismel has received for "meddling into the negotiations business," the lawyer insists that these parties "should realise that they should anticipate the cooperation of other parties like human rights activists and organisations that show a different angle of the situation."

A Palestinian lawyer, assisting Ms. Tsismel in her mission in Amman, said that he was sceptical that the negotiations would prove fruitful and that "people who have the right to return to their own homeland have more chance of being granted that right by resorting to the law."

About 2000 Palestinians have been deported from the West Bank since 1970 for "security reasons" and only 110 were allowed to return several months after the autonomy accord.

Moreover the fate of over 900,000 Palestinians who fled the territories following the 1967 Arab-Israeli war hangs in the balance until 1996 when Palestinians and Israel start negotiations over the final status of the territories, as stipulated in the Oslo autonomy accord.

During the session, attended by Prime Minister Abdul Salam Majali, Minister of Industry and

Trade Rima Khalaf replied to a question by deputy Farah Rababi on the prospect of allowing imports of small diesel driven cars. She said that this was banned by law because Jordan wanted to protect the environment from pollution. However, she said, the Ministry of Industry and Trade was studying the matter in the light of modern technological advances that reduce pollutant emissions from diesel engines.

Minister of Tourism and Antiquities Mohammad Al Adwan told parliament that the Department of Antiquities was taking all possible care of Islamic archaeological sites in the Kingdom. Replying to a question in this respect by Bader Riyal, the minister said that teams were at work conducting restoration at these sites. He said that the ministry was coordinating closely with the security authorities to prevent the vandalising and looting of archaeological sites.

On the question of animal feed, Supply Minister Adel Qudah announced that his ministry was still supplying poultry farms with their needs of feed. During the session, attended by Prime Minister Abdul Salam Majali, Minister of Industry and

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Following the Parliament session, Dr. Majali met the Lower House Speaker Saad Sour and House members in a private meeting to discuss a number of political issues.

Reporting on the two-hour meeting with Dr. Majali, Mr. Sour said the prime minister briefed the deputies on progress in mending relations between Jordan and the other Arab states, and also on Jordan's position at the Casablanca Islamic summit meeting.

The prime minister clarified Jordan's stand vis-a-vis the conference and the question of holy Jerusalem and Jordan's trusteeship of its Islamic shrines, said Mr. Sour.

Dr. Majali also briefed the deputies on the current efforts aimed at improving inter-Arab relations.

A lengthy debate on the topics followed the briefing, according to Mr. Sour.

Na'im: First Arab woman winner of Goethe Medal

By Amy Henderson
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Dr. Laila Na'im will be the first Arab woman to win the 1995 Goethe Medal, the German Goethe Institute announced.

Dr. Na'im will be awarded the medal in March in the German city of Weimar, said the Goethe Institute's Director Dieter Glade at a press conference on Tuesday. The award is in appreciation of Dr. Na'im's contribution to intellectual, cultural and social relations between Germany and Jordan.

The award is named after Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, an 18th century German poet who was deeply influenced by Arab thinking. Goethe maintained a very critical view of contemporary attitudes

towards Arab culture. His final work, "The East-West Divan" was an appeal to humanity to discover the origins of human culture in the Orient.

The medal is awarded

annually to personalities

from throughout the world

who have contributed to a

"more humane and under-

standing world," said Dr. Glade.

The award has traditionally been awarded to Europeans and North Americans with a smaller number coming from other parts of the world. In the Middle East, the award has gone to three Egyptian scientists.

Recipients have generally been Germanists, but as of late, the institute has awarded other personalities for cultural endeavours who are the "avant-grade" of their fields. Last year, director Billy Wilder was awarded

the Goethe Medal for his

life's work in film. Mr. Wilder has tackled some of the

most demanding social

issues of the century: politi-

cs, love, passion, loneliness

and the horrors of war.

Among his notable and

famous works are "Somé Like It Hot" and "Irma La

Douce."

"We are happy and proud that Dr. Na'im will be awarded the first medal to a Jordanian," said Dr. Glade. Born in Tiberias, Palestine, Dr. Na'im attended the German school Talitha Qumi College. She studied philosophy in Hamburg, Germany with a Bachelor of Arts in German literature and Islamic Studies. According to Dr. Glade, Dr. Na'im's translations of modern Arab lyrics into German and German verse and prose into Arabic have been

two of her major contribu-

tions to cultural under-

standing. Her work in Ger-

man and Arabic languages

has also included lectures

on German literature in

Jordan, Syria and Lebanon

as well as numerous pre-

sentations on Arab litera-

ture to German audiences

in the form of lectures,

symposia and articles.

"When I first heard about the award, I was a bit

sad," said Dr. Na'im.

"Although I am honoured

and am on the way to being

happy about it, I am dis-

appointed not to have the

recognition of society in my

home country."

Dr. Na'im's latest work is

a piece called "Cassandra 2000," a complex project

founded on two literary

pieces of classical and mod-

ern literature: the "Orte-

sia" by Aeschylus and "Kassandra" by Christa Wolf. This work, she says, aims to create a parallel

text between the two pieces

— including an analysis of

the complex Cassandra

and the review of the myth

from the viewpoint of a

modern Arab woman.



A picture taken on Dec. 24, 1989 of soldiers and civilians hiding behind a tank to protect themselves from snipers shooting in downtown Bucharest. Dec. 21, 1994 marks the

5th anniversary of the Romanian revolution which led to the overthrow of Nicolae Ceausescu's regime (AFP photo)

Romanian veterans remember revolution

BUCHAREST (R) — Veterans of the Romanian revolution, many crippled by bullets, took to the streets Wednesday in sombre parades to mark the fifth anniversary of the bloody overthrow of dictator Nicolae Ceausescu.

Revolutionaries laid wreaths and prayed before crosses at strategic Bucharest intersections where thousands stood up for the overthrow of Nicolae Ceausescu.

"We offered our bare chests to be shot," said 57-year-old Vasile Bala, clutching an old Romanian flag with the Communist era crest torn from the centre to leave a ragged hole.

"We started shouting anti-Communist slogans and down with Ceausescu." At that moment the firing started. They shot a boy next to me in the head and I was shot in the foot," he said.

Dec. 21, 1989 was the day riots which had brewed in the western Transylvanian city of Timisoara exploded in the capital — turning isolated un-

rest into an unstoppable wave which became the bloodiest of Eastern Europe's revolutions.

Reports that security forces killed protesters in Timisoara seemed through the blackout of the paranoid security apparatus Mr. Ceausescu built up over almost 25 years in power.

Mr. Ceausescu apparently believed he could still control the situation. Television footage of that day shows him clearly alarmed when protesters interrupted his speech from the balcony of the Central Committee building — unshaven of impudence.

"Nothing has changed, nothing," said 20-year-old Ana-Maria Vasu who marched with veterans of Dec. 21. "We were horribly betrayed. When we took to the streets in 1989 it was for a better life, a better economic life, not for freedom."

Now with living standards lower than under communism, high unemployment and 75 per cent inflation some Romanians wonder what they have gained from five years of democracy.

Others resent the fact that many members of the Communist old guard remain in power through the now democratically elected Party of Social Democracy. Such critics argue the overthrow of Mr. Ceausescu was a coup by fellow Communists rather than a genuine popular revolt against a hated dictator.

President Ion Iliescu

think of those who died here, all those colleagues I lost," said 52-year-old Petre Marin, his thumbless hand horribly disfigured by a bullet wound.

Five years on Romanians have little to celebrate.

"It was a people's uprising which overthrew the dictatorship of Nicolae Ceausescu," he said in a newspaper interview.

Eleven and Nicolae Ceausescu fled Bucharest on Dec. 22 but were soon captured. They were tried for genocide and other crimes by a tribunal and shot by firing squad on Christmas Day.

Yet Romanians still know little of the truth of the events of 1989. In a Balkan country which thrives on conspiracies no one has officially ever cleared the air about exactly what happened, who did what and for what motives.

"The truth, the truth," veterans shouted during a joint special session of the Romanian parliament Wednesday.

"We are interested in learning the truth," said Adrian Dumitrescu, a leader of the Dec. 21 Association of Veterans. "Five years after, we have yet to learn who shot at us. Did we kill ourselves? Did we mutilate ourselves?"

Wednesday rejected that theory.

"It was a people's uprising which overthrew the dictatorship of Nicolae Ceausescu," he said in a newspaper interview.

Analysts of Bosnia's intricate-riden politics, where solemn commitments to stop fighting have proven ephemeral in the past, were sceptical about the latest of many ceasefire deals.

But Mr. Carter was confident this one was for real.

U.N. upbeat on Carter truce pact

SARAJEVO (R) — The United Nations said Wednesday both sides in Bosnia's 32-month old war were serious in their pursuit to end hostilities after former U.S. President Jimmy Carter secured a ceasefire in the embattled republic.

"It is our understanding that both sides are serious in their pursuit of an agreement for the cessation of hostilities in Bosnia-Herzegovina," U.N. Protection Force spokesman Alexander Ivanko told reporters in Sarajevo.

His upbeat mood followed a ceasefire pact between the Muslim-led government and breakaway Serbs brokered by Mr. Carter, who wound up his whirlwind peace mission to Bosnia with a visit to Belgrade Tuesday. Mr. Carter left for home from Frankfurt Wednesday.

Mr. Carter, who made his name as international troubleshooter by defusing explosive crises in North Korea and Haiti earlier this year, pulled a truce agreement out of the hat Tuesday in his first foray into Bosnia.

Analysts of Bosnia's intricate-riden politics, where solemn commitments to stop fighting have proven ephemeral in the past, were sceptical about the latest of many ceasefire deals.

Mr. Ivanko said UNPROFOR had the troops necessary to implement the ceasefire pact.

saying both sides had agreed to silence their guns at noon Friday and then negotiate on "a total cessation of hostilities" by an end target date of Jan. 1.

The 70-year-old U.S. envoy, mediating privately but with strong U.S. diplomatic support, said negotiations would aim at a four-month ceasefire that could be renewed.

Bosnian Serb leader Radovan Karadzic invited U.N. special envoy Yasushi Akashi and UNPROFOR commander in Bosnia Lieutenant-General Sir Michael Rose to Pale to discuss ways of implementing the ceasefire agreement, his office said Wednesday.

Mr. Karadzic said in his invitation to the U.N. officials there was no time to waste and momentum gained towards achieving peace must not be lost.

Mr. Ivanko said Mr. Carter's agreement was very positive development which "created certain momentum for peace" and that UNPROFOR was urgently assessing its implications.

A deal on cessation of hostilities would require U.N. soldiers to insert themselves between two armies along a front of more than 1,000 kilometres.

Mr. Ivanko said UNPROFOR had the troops necessary to implement the ceasefire pact.

in buffer zones: "We have 23,000 troops on the ground and if we're asked to do so yes, we'll probably do so."

were agreed by both sides with the crucial exception of their attitude to a big power peace plan for Bosnia which Muslims accept but Serbs reject.

Bosnian President Alija Izetbegovic called the plan a basis for a comprehensive settlement while Mr. Karadzic regarded it as only a starting point.

The plan awards 51 per cent of Bosnia to the Muslims and Croats and the rest to the Serbs, who now control 70 per cent.

One Western diplomat briefed by U.S. officials on Mr. Carter's mission said Washington's position appeared to have subtly shifted towards recognition that the plan might have to be inked with to bring the Serbs on board.

Mr. Milosevic met Wednesday afternoon with representatives of the five-nation "contact group" on Bosnia, diplomats said here.

The meeting with the representatives from Britain, France, Germany, Russia and the United States got under way around 3:00 p.m. (1400 GMT).

Sarajevo's trudging to work in the snow Wednesday praised Mr. Carter's mediation efforts in Bosnia but doubted Serbs would honour their commitment to a four-month ceasefire.

N. Korea to return pilot's remains; hopes rise for survivor

SEOUL (AFP) — North Korea raised hopes Wednesday that a downed U.S. helicopter pilot would be borne by Christmas, saying it would release the remains of his dead colleague to a U.S. Congressman as a "humanitarian gesture."

The U.S. embassy in Seoul said simultaneously that Congressman Bill Richardson will cross the DMZ dividing the two Koreas at 10:00 a.m. (0100 GMT) Thursday with the remains of Chief Warrant Officer David Hilemon.

North Korea said Officer Hilemon was killed when its gunners shot down a OH-58 U.S. observation helicopter when it strayed across the Demilitarized Zone (DMZ) into North Korea Saturday.

"Richardson will be car-

rying the remains of Hilemon," U.S. Information Service officer Steve Rounds told AFP in Seoul. His co-pilot, Chief Warrant Officer Bobby Hall, is alive and in custody, according to Pyongyang.

Mr. Rounds said that he believed the actual handover would take place just before Mr. Richardson crossed into the South at the truce village of Panmunjom.

"I am hopeful about Hall... I think the North Koreans are on the road to returning him," a U.S. embassy official said on condition of anonymity.

Meanwhile, reliable allied military sources told AFP that the repatriation deal was struck at a high level meeting in Panmunjom between the

ing the pilot and the remains of the co-pilot would be of great concern to us and would affect the atmosphere in which we'd been hoping to improve our relations," Mr. Christopher told reporters.

Mr. Christopher dodged questions on whether the incident could jeopardise a \$4 billion agreement under which the United States would help North Korea build nuclear power plants if it ended its suspect nuclear programme.

"We're not at that point yet," the chief U.S. diplomat said, adding that prompt North Korean action could boost relations but that "the other side of the coin, unfortunately, is true as well."

Tanker, freighter on fire after collision; 8 missing

LISBON (AFP) — Eight crewmen were missing Wednesday from a blazing oil tanker carrying 130,000 tonnes of crude and a freighter, after the vessels collided overnight off Madeira, naval and insurance officials said.

Rescuers were still searching Wednesday morning for the missing crewmen, several hours after the tanker, the Hong Kong-based New World, collided with the Cyprus-registered Ya Maw-

laya off the Portuguese island, a senior Portuguese naval officer said here.

It was unclear to which boat the missing eight belonged.

The situation on board the New World, where fire broke out after the collision, was under control. Fire was also blazing on board the Ya Mawlaya.

There was no indication as to whether oil was leaking from the tanker, said the

Portuguese authorities, who had sent a frigate to the scene.

In Paris, French petroleum company Total said the tanker had been en route from Gabon to its refinery in the northern French port of Dunkirk with 130,000 tonnes of crude oil.

The company said in a statement that the tanker was a "Suez Max" type vessel

Irish premier wants to 'amend' constitution

LONDON (AFP) — The new Irish Prime Minister John Bruton said Wednesday he wanted to amend the clauses in the Irish constitution claiming the six countries of Ulster, but not do away with them altogether.

Articles two and three will not be "removed" but "amended to make it clear that there will be no change in Northern Ireland without the consent of the majority of the people in Northern Ireland," Mr. Bruton said in an interview on BBC Radio.

"That needs to be made clear. It's common sense, but it should be put in the constitution."

On Tuesday evening, Mr. Bruton and his British counterpart John Major reaffirmed their commitment to the so-called Declaration of Downing Street of Dec. 15.

1993, the basis of Anglo-Irish policy for the past year.

Mr. Bruton said London and Dublin intended to accelerate the Northern Ireland peace process by resuming consultations on the province's constitutional future in early January.

Emerging from more than two hours of talks with Mr. Major, Mr. Bruton told Channel Four television that both of them "intend to work very fast now" in elaborating a framework document on future multi-party talks on Northern Ireland.

Work on the document has been delayed for more than a month by the political upheaval in Dublin caused by the resignation of former Premier Albert Reynolds, which provoked a hiatus in bilateral talks and raised fears that the peace talks would lose their

impetus.

The document, which is not expected to be completed before the end of January, should contain a proposal to amend the Irish constitution, demanded by London. The 1920 Government of Ireland Act, which reaffirms British sovereignty over Northern Ireland, is also to be modified to include the formula that no change can be made without the consent of the population.

Meanwhile, a press report said Wednesday Irish Republican Army (IRA) units continue to operate throughout mainland Britain, where they are stockpiling ammunition and identifying targets.

A significant number of terrorists are drawing up lists of people and places that would be attacked in a bombing campaign if the Sept. 1

Police to probe shooting of man near White House

WASHINGTON (R) — A homeless man, shot by police as he confronted them with a knife outside the White House, was listed as critical but stable Wednesday after two lengthy operations.

Law enforcement officials were investigating Tuesday's shooting of Marcelino Cornelio who police said had chased an officer with a large knife and ignored orders to drop the weapon.

It was the fourth security incident on or near the White House grounds since mid-September and has sparked fresh concerns about security and the possible need to block off wider parts of one of the city's most-visited tourist sites.

Television tape of the incident raised concerns about the police response since it did not show the man lunging

to reveal his identity.

Mr. Cornelio turned to look over his left shoulder, possibly at the officer who shot him, and was struck as he turned back to face the officers closest to him.

"We feel the officer made the correct judgement to shoot the person," Major Robert Hines of the Park Police told CNN. "A knife can harm someone as much as a bullet, it can even penetrate a bulletproof vest."

The Park Police and the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) were jointly investigating the incident. The Park Police is responsible for the sidewalk in front of the White House, as well as Lafayette Park. The spokesman said an officer was allowed to use deadly force when his life or the life of a third party was in imminent danger.

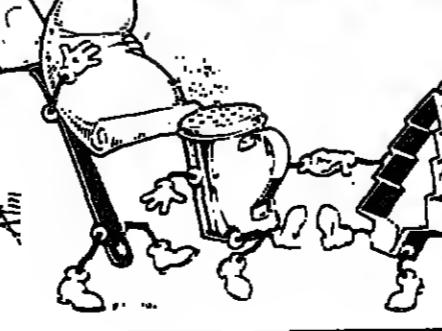
ton University Hospital, said Mr. Cornelio was taken into surgery a second time late Tuesday evening as doctors tried to stop bleeding in his abdominal cavity.

The shooting took place at 8:58 a.m. est (1358 GMT), on the pavement of Pennsylvania Avenue in front of the White House, said Sergeant Gregory Brown, a Park Police spokesman.

Television tape of the incident showed the man, carrying a long knife in his left hand, standing with his feet apart confronting by at least four officers aiming handguns at him on the wide sidewalk alongside the White House.

But the Park Service police officer who shot Cornelio was not on the tape, arriving at the scene in a patrol car, officials said. They declined

to reveal his identity.



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Perpetual threat remains

THE LONDON-based centre for Strategic Studies confirmed recently that Israel possesses no less than 100 deliverable nuclear bombs that can reach targets as far away as Iran, Iraq and the far reaches of the Gulf region. This revelation came as no surprise to the countries of the Middle East. The best evidence of Israeli nuclear capability was its refusal to ratify the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT). This Israeli stance has in turn prompted Egypt and other countries in the area to abstain from taking the necessary step to make the region nuclear-free.

What is also damaging about Israel's continued defiance of the international norms to renounce nuclear weapons is its lasting effect on peace between Israel and its Arab neighbours. The culture and psychology of peace in the region cannot be expected to remain unaffected by Israel's threatening posture. Israel's nuclear monopoly would only serve to extend its hegemony over the states of the entire area and this would not bode well for the peace climate that we all are trying to cultivate and encourage. It is one thing for Israel to demand the elimination of all mass-destruction weapons including biological and chemical arsenals and quite another to persist in enjoying military superiority. A much more sane position could be developed by the Israeli government by which security and safety for all nations in this part of the world are assured.

The presence of mass destruction weapons of whatever kind does not contribute to the sort of environment that we should strive for. Security arrangements between the countries can be established on something more stabilizing than nuclear deterrence or biological bombs.

The ongoing peace process envisages multilateral negotiations with a view to eliminate the need for big and mighty military machines. The creation of a common market and the forging of peaceful relations among the countries of the Middle East would be frustrated as long as nuclear bombs hang ominously over the heads of Arabs and Israelis alike.

ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

COMMENTING ON the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries' summit in Bahrain, a columnist in *Al Ra'i* daily said that the leaders need more than a miracle to help them choose their priorities well. Tareq Masa'weh said that the Gulf states currently face internal issues and external threats and suffer from financial difficulties because they have been counting on foreign powers to defend them at a very high cost. The writer said that the Gulf states are currently facing domestic opposition which is irking the regimes and confusing the situation further. Noting that the Gulf state of Kuwait, for instance, is linked by military alliances with the United States, Britain, France, Russia and China, the writer said Kuwait still feels unsafe from danger coming from Iraq, Iran or Israel. The writer said that even if the Gulf states built up an 100,000-strong army, they would not be safe unless they reach a consensus on reconciling with their neighbours and mending fences with the Arab sister states.

A WRITER in *Al Dastour* urged the Social Security Corporation (SSC) to upgrade its law which is now 16 years old with a view to increasing the benefits for the pensioners. Mohammad Daoud said that the SSC is reaping huge profits from its investments in banks and development projects, sufficient to improve the rate of pensions offered to the retired citizens. The beneficiaries, who are covered by the SSC law, should not be responsible for the SSC's previous administrations' misjudgements or errors like investing in non-profitable projects, and they expect benefits to accrue from their premiums accumulating with the SSC over the past 16 years, added the writer. He said the SSC should introduce a modern law, taking into consideration the numerous loopholes in the existing law.

VIEW FROM ACADEMIA

Literary mediocrity, literary creation and literary guidance

THROUGHOUT THE various literary circles in the Arab World, there is at present (and there has been for some time) a general dissatisfaction with the quality of modern or contemporary literary products. The works we have recently produced and those we are producing now are, many believe, decidedly "inferior" in both quality and quantity to what we produced in the good old days. On the whole this is true, for the times we are going through are not particularly congenial to literary creation, distinction and excellence. Naturally the reasons for such "decline," as it is often termed, are as varied and complex as the reasons for the decline of the overall Arab culture. Foremost among them, in my opinion, is the almost entire absence of critical assessment and guidance — a factor which is often ignored.

We should emphasise at the outset that not all of our contemporary creative works fail to live up to our expectations. There have been great successes and great breakthroughs. We have recently witnessed, and are still witnessing, the birth of masterpieces in various literary genres. One should by no means discount the contribution made (in the realm of novel writing) by Najeib Mahfuz, Ihsan Abdul Qudous, Hanna Meema, Jabra Ibrahim Jabra, Al Tayyeb Saleh, Abdulrahman Munif, etc. and (in the realm of poetry) by Bader Shaker Al Sayyab, Nizar Qabbani, Abdulwahab Al Bayati, Amal Dunqul, Mahmoud Darweesh, Sameeh Al Qasem, etc. They all, and others, have created literary texts which rank among the best in the world, now and at all times. Saleh's "Season of Migration to the North," which has been translated into English and many other languages, is being read and written about not only in the Arab World but also internationally. Several critics have compared it to global eternal works of fiction, such as Melville's "Moby-Dick" and Conrad's "Heart of Darkness." Who does not enjoy, appreciate and value the immortal lines of Qabbani and Al Qasem?

Nevertheless, there is feeling of disappointment and even disillusionment throughout the Arab Nation. For one thing, the number of literary works of the calibre of Saleh's "Season" which can appeal strongly to competent readers in the Arab World and the world at large is small indeed. Most published works (and I mean "published," not in manuscript form) are of very poor or mediocre quality. I would say that only 5 per cent of what gets published these days is of any lasting value; the remaining 95 per cent (and I

am not exaggerating here) are either trivial and amateurish works or in need of serious revision and rewriting. For another, literary achievement has been immensely disproportionate. Most of the luck or success we have had recently is in the sphere of poetry. The achievement in the short story, novel and (especially) drama has been quite modest. Compare the Arab novel to the South American, for example. Aside from the names I cited above, how many Arab novelists can one mention who may compete with Gabriel Garcia Marquez? How many serious plays can one find in the Arab World?

There are many reasons for the lack of literary originality and innovation and for the spread of mediocrity:

I. The Arab culture at large does neither stimulate nor encourage serious debate or original thinking. Our educational institutions and the various cultural establishments do not promote and foster critical thinking and exchange of opinion. Most often, literary creation is an outcome of the quality of discourse in the society to which it belongs. Henry James, often called "master of the novel," is right when he says: "Art lives upon discussion, upon experiment, upon curiosity, upon variety of attempts, upon the exchange of views and the comparison of standpoint." In our part of the world, there is very little "discussion," very little "experiment," very little "curiosity," very little "variety of attempts," very little "exchange of views," and very little "comparison of standpoint"; in other words, very little of everything James thinks is essential for innovation.

2. In our part of the world, it is easy to write and easy to publish. Most of our published as well as aspiring writers think writing is primarily (if not entirely) free and spontaneous. You get inspired, you sit down and record the feelings and ideas you experience and then you go to the publisher and publish. I am not denying here the importance of inspiration. No. But after inspiration comes revision. Creative writing is like any other type of writing: one has to write a first draft, a second, a third, etc., until the product looks good enough to be published. As for publication, if you know anyone influential at any of our institutions entrusted with the tasks of overseeing publications of sorts, you can publish any work you write. If not, bring the amount of JD 400 to any publisher and your book appears in two weeks in the market. No committee has to referee it, no editors have to revise it. In our society, publishing is as easy as having a haircut.

3. Writers do not get enough feedback, enough critical

assessment and enough guidance before they publish. This is the factor I wish to highlight most here, because this is what we can do something about.

In other parts of the world, when aspiring writers write poems, short stories, novels and plays, and after they revise them once, twice and three times, they show them to other people to get feedback as to what they ought to do to improve the quality of the work and precisely what they ought to revise and change. Drafts of poems, stories and plays are read the way exam papers are read for students.

Our aspiring writers do not (generally) show the drafts of their literary works to anyone. The idea is just not there. When and if they show them to you, it is because they want you to praise their achievement.

The solution?

At one level, we can say that when the cultural atmosphere changes qualitatively, the literary products improve qualitatively. Also, when publishing becomes more competitive, the published material improves in quality. These two, however, we do not have much control over under the circumstances.

But there is one thing we can do, namely to provide guidance for our aspiring authors. Help at this level can be provided in two ways. First, we ought to encourage our aspiring writers to form discussion groups. After a series of revisions, a person can show the clean draft of a literary text to a group of peers or superiors, depending on the situation one finds oneself in, and after he/she accommodates the various comments and suggestions one can think of publishing. Schools, universities and other culture and education establishments can play an important role in this respect, forming such groups and encouraging aspiring writers to join. Second, our universities ought to plan to make available MFA (Master of Fine Arts) programmes in which students enrol to learn the art of the trade or craft of writing poetry, short stories, novels and plays. The MFA programmes are two-year graduate programmes open to a limited number of gifted students who have demonstrated the potential to be excelling future poets, novelists, etc. who meet weekly for two years to discuss each other's works, debate matters, exchange views, explore venues, and experiment until they find their true voices and develop their own styles. We need this kind of programme in our society.

In the words of Ben Jonson, a writer is made as well as born.

Hikmat Al Masri symbolised unity

By Samir Habashneh

LAST THURSDAY I was one of the group of Jordanian Parliament members attending the funeral of the late Hikmat Al Masri, a former House speaker and one of the most prominent Palestinian personalities.

The funeral, which was held in the West Bank town of Nablus, was marked by respect for Mt. Masri, leaving a very deep impression with me and all those present.

Although I never knew Mr. Masri personally, I felt it was not necessary for me, and others, to only pay respect to the great men with whom we had personal contact.

Respect is due to Mr. Masri for the great services he rendered to his countrymen on both banks of the River Jordan.

Those who knew Mr. Masri well knew his patriotism and his pan-Arab affiliation; the unanimous respect accorded to Mr. Masri by a

wide spectrum of intellectuals and politicians stands witness to the man's past achievements and his prominent role in society.

What is more important here is that Mr. Masri was one of the veteran Jordanian/Palestinian leaders who enthusiastically believed in achieving unity between the people on both sides of the River Jordan.

Joining hands with his colleagues on the two banks, Mr. Masri was able to make the dream come true in the form of full economic, social and cultural merger and helped fuse the political identity of the two people on the two banks of the eternal river.

His deeds were rightly considered as unique historic feats accomplished in cooperation with remarkable and distinguished personalities of the time.

Mr. Masri and his colleagues were not deterred by any barriers and did not search for excuses for divisions; they did not belong to

those who would use false patriotic to hide their selfish and narrow-minded objectives in order to achieve their goals.

One can rightly say that Mr. Masri and his colleagues succeeded in creating a type of unity that can serve as model for attempts at unity in the Arab World.

Indeed, the generation of these great men realised the importance of unity which serves as remedy for backwardness and as tool for Arab awakening and renaissance, and they achieved this unity despite the hardships and numerous obstacles.

Paying last respect to Mr. Masri and attending his funeral does not only evoke good memories about his great and distinguished deeds, but represents a real challenge presented to the new generation by Mr. Masri and his veteran group.

The challenge is whether we, the new generation, can pursue the goal of unity between Palestine and Jordan, whether we can work out an appropriate formula for our union, which actually exists, whether we can transcend differences and can expose those who advocate divisions and their real unhygienic objectives, whether we can restore real unity having learned from our past errors.

These and many other challenges face us today and it is hoped that we can rise to the historic occasion.

At the funeral, we met with Palestinian leaders from Jerusalem; Hebron, Ramallah, the Jordan Valley, Toul Karem and Jenin and all I can say is that I have come back more fond of the idea of genuine unity.

All those present advocate Jordanian-Palestinian unity and each one of them took advantage to express his real feelings about unity.

The writer is a member of the Lower House of Parliament from Karak. The above article is translated from the Arabic daily *Al Ra'i* for which Mr. Habashneh contributes a weekly column.

Chechenya war could lead to return to dictatorship

By Dr. Mohydeen L. Quandour

RECENT EVENTS in the Russian Federation and the former Soviet republics are or should be a source of serious concern to the Russian Federation parliament. Since the disintegration of the Soviet Union, the Caucasus has seen three terrible wars. The fourth, possibly the most serious one, is now unfolding in Chechnya. There are several other territorial disputes with other smaller ethnic republics of the federation which may also end in serious conflict.

I wish to put this case to the parliament as concussions to my observations of Russian and Soviet history, economic and ethnographic statistics and, most of all, in the interest of Russia and its long-term stability and growth.

Any keen student of Russian history might reach the same conclusions as I have simply that pluralism (i.e. multi-ethnic societies) has been responsible for the disintegration of the Soviet Union. The same destiny awaits a multi-national Russia.

It is an established scientific criterion that when ethnic minorities represent 10 per cent or less of the total population, they are gradually integrated into a single nation thus preserving the mother nation's ethnic-cultural distinction. By the end of the 19th century (1879 census) the non-Slavic peoples of Russia represented 10 per cent of the total population. This was still within the range of

their personal interests with those in Moscow and social desperation developed even further. Everybody became dissatisfied. The ethnic Russians complained that the non-Russian minorities were being pampered at their expense. The ethnic minorities complained that their standard of living was meager and felt stranded at the outer edge of social welfare. Thus, the national economy continued its downwards slide at an ever-increasing pace. No amount of international borrowing or centralised economic planning could correct the long trend of waste and mismanagement which ensued and the USSR as we knew it disintegrated.

It is my contention that the multi-ethnic Russian Federation faces a similar fate unless some corrective measures are instituted. Why? Because the same cadre of "elite" bureaucrats would be loyal to himself. The inevitable result was that these local "elites" laid claim to power and eventually to the notion of "sovereignty" in the post-totalitarian era.

The Soviet Union increasingly found itself compelled to subsidise and support the ever-growing non-Russian societies for economic growth and social services, thus negatively impacting its own economic development and achievements. But such assistance and subsidies from Moscow rarely reached those for whom they were intended. They managed to enrich and empower the local ethnic "elite" instead. Corruption became inevitable when these groups fused

shown in a comparison of a 10-year period; the census of 1979 and 1989. The increase in the Russian ethnic group amounted to 5.6 per cent while the increase of the North Caucasian ethnic group amounted to 13 per cent Circassians and up to 30 per cent (non-Circassians). The source for this data is the Russian Federation State Committee for Statistics. There are several other similar territories in the Russian Federation (Tuvia, Tuva and Yemenn) for example.

In the areas of the national republics in the north Caucasus, 33 per cent of the population are non-Russian. But what is more significant is a study of population densities in the north Caucasus as compared to "mother" Russia. In the north Caucasus this is 47 people per square kilometre while in Russia proper the average is 8.6 people per square kilometre. The population density for the strife areas of Chechnya and North Ossetia is 66 people and 79 people per square kilometre respectively. Rural population trends are increasing (42.7 per cent for the region compared to 26.4 per cent for Russia). This trend is historically a worrying phenomenon since rural overpopulation is often a prelude to civil strife. Furthermore, the predominantly Russian areas of Stavropol and Krasnodar are taking in refugees from the Caucasian republics which only adds to the tension. One does not need

to be a soothsayer to predict that the same fate will befall the Chechenya and North Ossetia. The divergence in ethnographic growth patterns is clearly

LETTERS

No excuse for human rights violations

To the Editor:

Despite the fact that Dr. Waleed Sa'di's article "Universality vs. individuality of human rights" (Jordan Times, Dec. 12, 1994) illustrates, as I read it, that stunning violations of human rights, are nothing but an indispensable outcome of the state-to-state variations in priorities and, more clearly, will be abide by international human rights instruments, I still believe the article tends to propose a very severe notion against victims of human rights. The conclusion I reached after reading the article is that if we are to blame developed countries for the economical gap, Third World countries' favorite excuse, then we are automatically blaming them for the mistreatment of citizens in Third World countries by their own governments.

Such a harsh reading, which is more transparent in the article than a reading between the lines, explicitly contradicts with the principles and instruments of international human rights. If we read these principles collectively, we strive to justify any aspect of Dr. Sa'di's opinion and yet find ourselves incapable of reaching that end.

1. The Covenant of Civil and Political Rights, which is of a binding nature, calls on all states to protect civil and political rights to the same extent. That is mainly due to the fact that the issue of protecting these rights is by no means linked to the standard of development. A human being is free from torture, free to exercise his religious beliefs and protect his right to liberty; refraining from torture does not require an advanced standard of development. On the other hand, the Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights calls for the progressive implementation of the rights derived from its articles since the standard of development is vital to increasingly achieve protection of such rights.

2. Most rights in the universal declaration, or the magna carta of human rights as some human rights professors like to call it, are of a binding character. Such a character does not stem from the declaration itself, but rather from the customary international nature that grants them the obligatory status. Furthermore, one can present an argument that a state has a minimum latitude to violate any of the rights in the declaration since it acquires it as a "package" of binding nature, through the general acceptance and sense of obligation.

3. It is rather ironic that most governments proposing this blind linkage between the human rights of their citizens and development aid are an extinction to liberty movements that once fought to regain the rights of their people from developed countries, without requesting a period to enable them to advance; or are military governments that usually declare NGOs' reports as untrue or reports of other states as unjustified intervention. But they never dispute the core issue here: because their theory is that no such violations exist.

4. Speaking of intervention, Professor Thomas Buergenthal, who taught at the George Washington University law school and a previous judge and president of the Inter-American Court of Human Rights, often speaks of "the internationalisation of human rights, and the humanisation of international law." By saying this, he is declaring the right is allowed to intervene to sanction states violating the human rights of its people, not to mention foreigners.

In sum, the issue of human rights is not one of complaisance and subtle propaganda as it once was. I do and that developed states need to cooperate. A very interesting question to investigate, in view of Dr. Sa'di's Jackson-Vanik Amendment (the amendment to the 1974 U.S. Trade Act), according to which a state stipulates that to qualify for its aid or for the tariff's preferential treatment (e.g. U.S. v. China) should be universally applied. In my view this can be done, although it would cause more severe governments.

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The Jordan Times welcomes letters and contributions from its readers on any subject they wish to tackle. Letters intended for publication, however, should contain the writer's full name and preferably address as well. Names can be withheld only upon request and under special circumstances. Letters are subject to editing. The newspaper is not responsible for the return of unused manuscripts.

(Continued on page 7)

Weekender

Dec. 22, 1994

Published Every Thursday

Will the state relax and allow civil society to emerge?

By Mohammad Mashariqa

It is often rumoured that the University of Jordan's teaching staff are more concerned with matters related to public relations rather than questions of scientific research.

"More often than not such talk emanates from the faculty members themselves, such as Dr. Ibrahim Othman, professor of sociology, says that the university is an official institution and being its main task is to act in a manner that would please the regime and rise to its expectations.

He accuses the university of failing to create for its staff the appropriate climate and circumstances to carry out sound research work, now that we have academic or administrative freedoms.

Furthermore, he says: "Government officials often tend to marginalise the role of the university and its staff, simply because seldom does the government take into consideration any resolutions emanating from or concerning scientific research and their results."

Even in the Jordan-Israel peace negotiations the university was totally excluded while in contrast, Israeli universities were all involved in all aspects of the negotiations through their specialists, added Dr. Othman.

Despite the feeling of pessimism as expressed by the faculty members, we believe that the university remains the place where one can still pin great hopes for producing advanced ideas for change, for charting policies for the coming stage and other endeavours.

In fact, one can not possibly isolate the university from the socio-economic development in the country because it serves as a mirror reflecting the various trends, ideas and concepts of society.

Subsequently one can say that some of the ongoing dialogues inside the university and within the academic circles, which tackle issues closely connected with the state and the society as well as the future in the light of the rapid regional developments, reflect the real life and the actual situation inside this educational institution.

Dr. Mousa Shtewi from the university's Sociology Department believes that there can be no alternative to re-examining the whole structure of the Jordanian

AMMAN CULTURAL PULSE

society vis-à-vis the state if the kingdom is to cater to the requirements of the coming era of peace and the new and great openness to politics.

This is a pre-requisite since the creation of the state in the early 1920s marked the beginning of the creation of the Jordanian society itself; which means that the state was responsible for the formation of the various classes in society.

Dr. Shtewi says that the state came into existence and has developed in a manner that served its own needs in the first place rather than meeting the needs of society, "and most often the state's development was motivated by political objectives rather than social reasons."

The state, which depended on external financial aid rather than on taxes collected from citizens, felt always independent from the people and hence was not required to answer to it.

This situation helped in the creation of separate forms of integrated communities in Jordan under the regime's protection and subsequently morally deprived of the right to question the state about the country's foreign debts or about the state's political and economic decisions, according to Dr. Shtewi.

In the view of Dr. Othman, the distorted and confused image in the university is a natural result of the existence of certain factions whose sole qualifications lie in or relate to specific social affiliations on loyalties which have nothing to do with national production, neither are they connected ideologically or directed towards serving the Jordanian society as a whole.

He says that these factions and groups draw their power and influence from the extent to which they can be of use to or give support for the political regime, helping it in falsifying the realities or in controlling society.

In a semi-revolutionary manner Dr. Othman presents his own ideas for social change, urging individuals to free themselves from the imposed ideas of the community, calling on individuals to free themselves from abstract ideas that are not based on practical foundations of realities and truth.

To back his views, Dr. Othman cites the example of the Islamic movements which, he says, have failed in achieving their objectives because they neglected

the acquisition of scientific knowledge in favour of moral values and meanings.

Dr. Othman is awaiting a real effort on the part of the intelligentsia, which still counts on a popular base for power, to lead the battle against the present reality. He says the intellectual groups can still try to create what he terms as 'constitutional circumstances and conditions' through which they can induce the desired change.

In remarks about the Jordan-Israel peace treaty, Dr. Othman says that it would eventually lead to a confrontation of a different nature. He believes that Israel would provide the intellectuals with an open arena for comparing Arab and Israeli rights and duties, as well as cultural and scientific standards, and also their behavioural patterns. He says these factors will stimulate awareness among members of the society in Jordan.

Dr. Shtewi is more optimistic because he believes that the treaty offers a good chance for interaction with a highly-advanced society, culturally and scientifically.

I do not agree that Israel represents a mini-imperialist state, stresses Dr. Shtewi, because he says, the challenges that it represents to the Arabs are no different from those posed to them from other nations.

He believes that neither Israel nor the Arabs possess integrated cultural plans, and that both sides are plagued by some forms of backwardness, and fundamentalism as well as enjoying elements of progress.

SOCIETY ON THE MOVE

Inside Casablanca: An unfamiliar story about familiar faces and places

The Jordan Times would have liked to send its own reporter to the Casablanca summit to keep its faithful readers aware of the inside story on what actually happened there. For purely organisational reasons, however, the newspaper had to rely on other sources to tell what otherwise was a major story for Jordan. Those sources helped clarify some aspects of why leaders of Muslim countries chose to praise Saudi Arabia's contribution to Islamic causes and holy places but failed to recognise Jordan's historic role in guarding Islam's third holiest places in Jerusalem. Prime Minister Abdul Salam Majali, in a press conference he held just several hours after his return from Morocco early Friday, explained that the failure to mention Jordan in the resolution was not the result of any failing on the part of the Jordanian diplomacy which he heads. But a fuller explanation, which was by necessity much less diplomatic, came from other sources quoted by last Saturday's issue of *Al Aswq* newspaper. *Al Aswq*, which sometimes tends to exaggerate the importance of its own scoops, nevertheless wrote a spicy report, whose authenticity cannot be dismissed out of hand. For those readers who missed the action (or just relied on our meagre resources to provide the entire story), the following translation of *Al Aswq*'s report, written by a Pierre Santana (not exactly a familiar by-line to Jordanian newspaper readers), was datelined Casablanca:

"Throughout my political life, which is more than a quarter-of-a-century old, I have not witnessed, heard of or read about a summit like this one, which ended 15 minutes ago... all those present agree that it (the OIC) is now dead but none of its members dares to demand its burial. Most of its leaders have no interest in declaring it dead so as not to lose financial allocations paid by one of the oil-producing Arab countries."

This was the conviction expressed by the foreign minister of one African-Arab country who was addressing a group of American and European journalists on condition of anonymity. He said: "For sure it will be the end of my political career if they discover that I am revealing details of secret alliances and deals through which the resolutions (which incidentally are greater in than that of the OIC member states) were passed, although, I may add, these resolutions are not even worth the price of the paper on which they were written."

We were four journalists who were summoned after midnight last Thursday by two ministers who participated in the closed sessions of the Casablanca summit. One such official was the above mentioned minister and the other represented an Asian-Islamic country. It was apparent that their desire to have this "painful" briefing was stirred by a personal feeling of pain, "the pain we are afflicted by when we look at fundamental difference between the dead Islamic summit, which was unable to tackle any of the bloody conflicts in the Islamic World, and other summits held at the same time elsewhere, (in the German city of) Essen or in Florida. We see the latter two summits bravely and efficiently tackling issues relating to the causes of their peoples and to launching vital programmes and frameworks which promise sovereignty and prosperity in the coming decade," as the Asian minister put it.

In their briefing the two ministers took turns in explaining how the OIC lost the remaining parts of its religious and political functions to become a tool in the hand of one oil-producing country, reducing the other members states to roles that can be bought freely on the market. Between them the two ministers came up with four political frameworks within which the deals that gave rise to the resolutions were struck:

★ ★ The first and basic deal was over hosting the summit in Morocco. Saudi Arabia had undertaken to pay \$50 million to Morocco for hosting the summit in lieu of holding it in Riyadh or Jeddah, since the health condition of the Saudi monarch does not allow him to put up with demanding protocols. Holding the summit in Saudi Arabia would have also highlighted differ-

ences inside the ruling family with respect to the issue of succession, as well as given foreign journalists a chance to write about political repercussions of the financial crisis in the Kingdom and religious and political opposition which occupy three main spots on the internal Saudi map. One is reserved for the Sunnis Wahabis, the second for the Shites in eastern Saudi Arabia and the third for political forces on the left, led by Sheikh Ahmad Zaki Al Yamani and on the right, ultra-conservative groups.

Information circulating at the summit speaks of a figure amounting to \$145 million which Saudi Arabia paid or has committed itself to pay before and at the summit. After deducting Morocco's share of \$50 million, about \$95 million was allocated to buy countries' positions on issues mentioned in the resolutions.

Prince Salman Ben Abdul Aziz, the fourth most powerful member of the royal family, has authorised \$2 million for the Jerusalem Committee, with \$50,000 of it wasted on travels by committee members. To enable Saudi Arabia to ensure the approval of the summit's committee on issuing praise for Jerusalem, the "grants" had exceeded \$14 million, most of which were distributed to senior officials in political departments of a number of Arab countries which participated in the drafting committee. Hence it was natural and expected that the praise for Prince Salman's initiative would not be accompanied by recognition of the Jordanian role in renovating the Dome of the Rock Mosque and preserving the Islamic character of the holy shrines.

★ ★ The second framework in which the deals were made was the one linking a group of Arab countries looking for a regional role because they feel the international changes made them lose their roles. The two ministers who briefed us depicted the political anxiety which was dominating Cairo, Damascus and Riyadh because of their feeling of losing U.S. support and because of the uncertainty surrounding their future roles.

To prove this psychological anxiety in these three Arab capitals, the two foreign ministers outlined to us evidence of the shift in Washington's position, starting with the media campaign against Cairo for its coordination with Libya, to talk about corruption, bankruptcy, human rights abuse and drug trafficking in Lebanon, and finally keeping (Syria) on the U.S.' list of the so-called countries supporting terrorism.

The anxiety thus led to a call for resurrecting and reviving a historical axis of the turn of the century, which rejected any regional role for Jordan and opposed granting the Hashemites their legitimate religious and leadership rights. In the end these countries could not annul the legitimacy of Jordan's custodianship of holy places in Jerusalem, but at the same time found it excessive for the summit to praise this role.

★ ★ The third feature that dominated the proceedings of the Casablanca summit was the internal Palestinian situation, in particular the issue of competition for the position of head of the (PLO's) political Department between Farouq Qaddoumi (Abu Al Lutf), and Faisal Husseini.

At the conference of the Arab foreign ministers in Cairo a few days earlier, Abu Al Lutf had stressed the importance and legitimacy of the Jordanian position in caring for the holy places. In doing that, he was taking a position similar to that of Hussein. But it seems that the Palestinian leadership's meeting in Casablanca brought to the fore personal sensitivities, maybe through external Arab influence, which resulted in Abu Al Lutf's warm approach towards Abu Ammar (Yasir Arafat) prompting him to adopt a position compatible with that of the Syria-Egypt-Saudi Arabia axis.

The two foreign ministers pointed out to us that the transitional difficulties of the Palestinian National Authority may have also prompted a perceived need to find an "external enemy". Within this context, there was no better way to do that than keeping Jordanian-Palestinian relations tense. The question of Jordanian custodianship of the holy shrines was thus seized upon by Arafat as a diversionary measure against his home-grown problems.

★ ★ And while most of the talk at the summit was over Jerusalem, no member state was eager to delve into concealed apprehensions related to the issue of pharisaic Arab custodianship of holy places in Mecca and Medina. This issue was previously stirred up by Iran and then it became static, but it could surface again at the Islamic summit in Tehran in 1997. If

Saudi Arabia is certain that the upcoming Tehran conference will discuss custodianship of these holy places, the decision to bury the OIC will be immediate, but it will be a decision that will be several years late, according to the opinion of the two foreign ministers.

The briefing with the two ended with them saying Jordan had come away from the summit with victories on two fronts that Amman did not seek in the first place but ones that the Islamic leaders nevertheless had to recognise.

The first was an implicit approval of the Hashemites' guardianship of holy places. While this approval was not done with fanfare, the fact that it came was all that mattered as far as Jordan was concerned.

— The second gain was support by the OIC of the Jordanian-Israeli peace treaty which came despite the fact that the two sides expressed in so many words that the OIC was not a party to the peace process.

ANOTHER MYSTERY UNRAVELS: Clarifying yet another politico-economic mystery that has puzzled Jordanians for the past few weeks did not require a little-known foreign journalist this time. Prominent economist Fahed Fanek, in one of his daily columns in the *Al Ra'i* Arabic daily earlier this week, revealed what he called the secret of the \$65 million question that brought about the resignation of Deputy Prime Minister Thouqan Hindawi and nearly the fall of the Majali government. Here is how Dr. Fanek solved it.

According to the economist, the government here was eagerly awaiting word of a \$6.7 billion assistance package from the European Union (EU) to the countries of the Arab Maghreb and Mashreq. But when the pie was divided, Jordan's portion was reported by Minister of Planning Hisham Khatib to be \$65 million, and this calculation may have been "the straw that broke the camel's back."

The EU was proposing a partnership with the Arab Maghreb and Mashreq, in addition to Israel and Turkey, that would result in free trade region constituting the largest market in the world. The prize was to be ECU 5.5 billion (\$6.7 billion) over five years with an added goal of convincing the recipient countries to take "suitable" decisions with regard to democracy, human rights, reform programmes, the environment, combating corruption, and good government.

But Jordan's share of the pie met with outrage on the part of some ministers, more than likely because they could not accept that such an amount could be the "hoped-for peace assistance" from such a large and wealthy bloc as the EU.

What added fuel to the fire was the revelation that the \$65 million would be paid out over five years, and in other arrangements, over 30 years. To top that off, the ministers were reportedly told that the assistance was not certain.

But according to Dr. Fanek, the European partnership proposal is still a preliminary idea which may or may not be accepted. If approved, Jordan's share, assuming that it is five per cent, would equal \$65 million annually, and not over five or 30 years. Dr. Fanek added that if the country's share is 7.5 per cent, then the annual pay out would rise to \$100 million.

While Dr. Fanek is of the belief that the EU partnership is unrelated to a peace dividend, and that Europe should be thanked for thinking of the Arab Maghreb and Mashreq, he would be hard pressed to convince those angry officials who truly saw "red" over the issue.

DISCIPLINED BURGLARS: Now on to combatting crime, only this week Public Security Director Lieutenant General Abdil Rahman Udwan announced, on the eve of Arab Police Day, that the crime rate in Jordan was on the decrease. Without statistics to that effect citizens continue to read about police rounding up gangs of burglars and hear of incidents in which homes of people they know were burglarised. One such home hit last week was that of CNN Amman correspondent Stefan Kotsonis. In through Kotsonis' front door went what some people are describing as a new wave of "disciplined burglars" who find it smarter to leave behind traceable electronic equipment and just go for the jewels and money. In the Kotsonis household, however, the burglar helped himself/herself to less than \$100 worth of Canadian, Syrian and Kenyan currency and took the time out for a Diet Pepsi. Kotsonis has since beefed up security and found a house-sitter for the

holidays while he sets out back to base in Atlanta and a yuletide respite in Canada.

Kotsonis relayed the news of the burglary at a dinner hosted by Washington Post Amman correspondent Nora Bustani. It is not certain whether Bustani, who was planning a vacation to Brazil, would be scouting for a house-sitter herself, but perhaps she was able to convince a guest or two to take up the offer as several of them were just passing through town. Included in her gathering were Jerusalem-based Boston Globe correspondent Ethan Bronner and Chicago Tribune correspondent Bob Rawley, both back from Lebanon and Syria. The Wall Street Journal's Peter Waldman, his wife Shereen and new-born daughter Jenna, Minister of Justice Hisham T., USIS Director Peter Kovach, Jordanian artist and preservationist Ali Jabi, Fadi and Rula Ghandour of ARAMEX and Silsas enterprises, ESCWA Press Officer Vera Azar, Amman-based correspondent for Australian Broadcasting Corporation Debbie Whitmont, her assistant Ramia Kadri and Rania's husband Adi.

END OF A WRITING SPREE: Had Bustani known of his return, surely she would have included the ever-prolific publisher, columnist and author Rami Khouri who is back in Jordan from a three-and-a-half month tenure as a visiting scholar at Syracuse University's Global Affairs Institute in upstate New York. There, Khouri completed the writing of what he describes as a "hard-hitting" book on contemporary political culture and political transformation in the Arab World. Scheduled to be out in 1995 via Lawrence Hill Books in New York, the yet untitled work, says Khouri, "deals candidly with the nature of modern Arab political culture and governance systems — the good and the bad." With such a task to conquer, Khouri still had time to do the university lecture circuit which took him to Villanova, Harvard, Johns Hopkins and Georgetown universities, and out to the U.S. west coast to the University of California-Los Angeles (UCLA) and back across the North American continent against east to St. Francis Xavier in Nova Scotia. Khouri is glad to be back, he says, catching up with all the changes and writing his Tuesday column in the *J.T.* His wife Ellen, who runs one-half of the couple's publishing business, was relieved to have him home in time for the holidays. As with all spouses left carrying the bag of business and family, Ellen set back looked at her husband and said, "Ya Rami, guess who's cooking Christmas dinner?"

SUPPORT FOR ACHIEVEMENT: Recipients of the Crown Prince Award, which honours individuals for academic and physical achievements and community service, recently also included Royal Jordanian and the Philadelphia Hotel for "services rendered" to the award programme. At a ceremony at the Amman Baccalaureate School HRH Prince Ghazi presented this year's Crown Prince Award to RJ Public Relations Chief Munib Toukan and General Manager of the Philadelphia Hotel in Amman Faisal and Nawar, who received the honours on behalf of their organisations and staff.

PATE OR CHOPPED LIVER? In an update of other hotel activities, Inter-Continental's General Manager Showki Ayoub said his hospitality industry establishment was far from considering menu additions such as matzah ball soup, potato latkes and chopped liver. Ayoub said that reports of hotels in Amman starting to serve Kosher meals were overblown, and that such arrangements are only made by pre-arrangement and for large groups. This was not completely in contradiction with what Food and Beverage Manager Jacco Klip had told a journalist earlier on, when he said that he and his staff were investigating the feasibility of offering completely Kosher menus. Klip, a Dutchman who previously worked for Hilton Hotel in Abu Dhabi and started only five months ago at the InterCon, said there have been many requests for Kosher meals, but "to go all the way (down the utensils, crockery and cutlery) requires study." Should the hotel go ahead with plans to go Kosher, it would not be in the market on its own. Daoud Qutob, manager of Diana Tours, had just told the Associated Press that his company was planning to establish a chain of Kosher restaurants near Jordan's tourist sites. Who knows what might come next: A Kosher week for all Jordanians to enjoy?

(Continued on page D)

The EDP blues

By Jean-Claude Elias

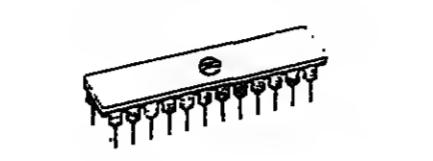
Home users of personal computers (PCs), whether beginners, amateurs, advanced users or professionals, have a very exclusive relationship with their machine. It's just between "it" and them. No one else is involved.

When everything works without a glitch, it's heaven on earth, and when they encounter any difficulty, they usually try to solve it by a personal effort. They browse through user manuals, follow the time-honoured "trial and error" procedure, or eventually call a friend who has been through the same problem before. Whatever the approach, it rarely involves the professional intervention of a data processing or computer expert, who would anyway charge high fees for his assistance.

At the other end of the users spectrum are large corporations. These organisations who now depend heavily on data processing for their regular operation, usually have resident computer specialists. Considering the number of machines that companies now use and the important number of related questions that require an urgent answer, this on a daily basis, hiring one or more computer graduates, as full-timers, becomes a vital need. Some large organisations even establish EDP (Electronic Data Processing) centres that are on a par with professional computer companies on both the technical level and the number of staff.

Somewhere between home users and large corporations, small-to-medium size companies are lost. With EDP needs certainly more important than those of home users, these organisations consider that their turnover does not justify hiring in-house computer professionals like large corporations do. The result, often, are daily problems that are either left unsolved

chip talk



or have to wait till a professional is called, from outside. Even a regular maintenance and support contract with a dedicated computer company would not give the same quality service as in-house specialists would, for on-call and preventive maintenance is rarely performed on a daily basis. When the needs reach a point where daily intervention is required, then hiring resident specialists become less expensive than an external contract. This is usually the case for any organisation that makes use of five computers or more, though the value and the importance of the work done is more significant than the absolute number of machines.

What often prevents small-to-medium size organisations from taking the important step of employing EDP experts is an old-fashioned attitude that makes them think the most important investment is buying the machines. This has proved to be totally wrong in modern business. What comes first in terms of data processing budget shares allocation is the technical support and staff training, then comes the software, whether ready-made or tailor-made, and last comes the equipment purchase. Unless such a change in mentality is undergone, small companies may never enjoy an efficient EDP operation.

ON THE LIGHTER SIDE

By Mohammad A. Shuqair

LET'S CHAT IN ARABIC

— She did me brown. *Lakad khada'atni.*
— She made a laughing stock of me. *Ja'alatni od'hooka.*
— She broke my heart. *Hat'tamat qalbi.*
— She accused me of dishonesty. *It'tahamatni bel-khiyana.*
— She took the edge off me. *Lakad kasaarat shawkati.*
— She left me in the lurch. *Tarakatni fee warta.*
— She threw mud at me. *!ekad lat'akhat sum'ati.*
— She racked my nerves. *Arhaqat a saabi.*
— She made light of my words. *Istabhat bekalami.*
— She had put my head off. *Lakad atarat sawaabi.*
— She fleeced me. *Ibtazzat sinwaali.*
— She has cooked my goose. *Lakad qadat alayha.*
— She is the living image of her mother. *Innaha sirro ommeha.*
— I've lost the first round with her. *Lakad khasrat al-javla ab-oola ma'aha.*
— What an ill-luck! *Ya labu min huzz sa'ye.*
— Neck or nothing was my last choice. *Innal hayat wa-innal mawt kana khyari al-akheer.*

★ ★ ★ ★

INVITATION TO LAUGHTER

* FRIEND: "Does your wife clean your suit every day?"
HUSBAND: "Never. She only cleans up the pockets."

★ ★ ★ ★

* In Boston, a woman took revenge upon her husband in the following way: She filled his car's petrol tank with sand, cut the electric wires with a knife, wrote the words "Farewell to love" on the boot and then set the whole car on fire.

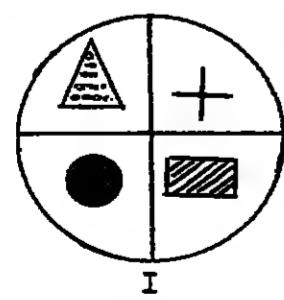
★ ★ ★ ★

* HE: "Your dress is very short, darling." SHE: "What for?" HE: "Your dress seems like a joke." SHE: "That's right. The shorter the joke is, the sweeter it is."

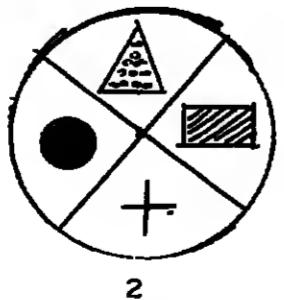
BANK OF KNOWLEDGE

1. Whose voice was as loud as that of 50 men?
2. To what does sporran refer?

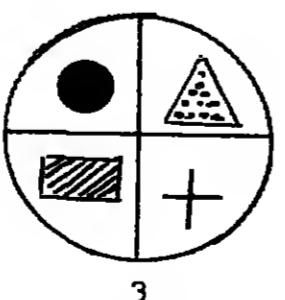
(B) Underline which two of these figures do not form a pair.



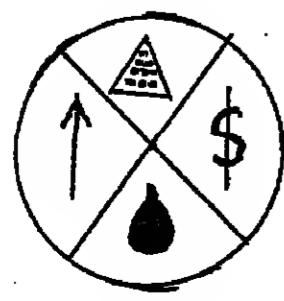
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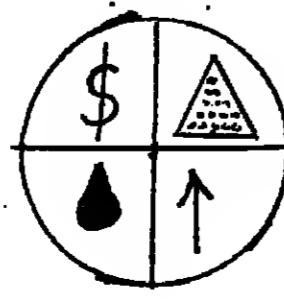
2



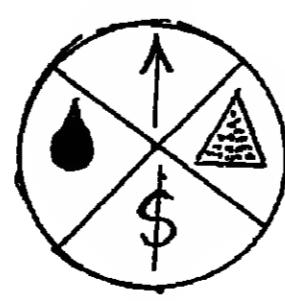
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4



5



6

Existence is a rabbit plucked from a hat

By Samer Ghaleb Bagaeen

Philosophy in this century has neither been wildly popular nor has it been seen as a great and glorious adventure. Rather, it has been regarded as the obscure preserve of a few sad devotees stricken with a passion for futile game-playing and endless word play. The simple truth is that, with the one brief exception of post-war Paris, philosophy has not been

hit. Latterly it has also suffered from being a spectacularly politically incorrect activity. More than any other discipline, philosophy is founded on an endless vista of Dead White European Males. Philosophy books seem to be either indistinguishable from maths books or so indulged in verbal analysis as to defy comprehension.

This is an unfair picture but it carries just enough truth to convince most people that philosophy is no longer what you want it to be — thrilling and accessible.

The current publishing sensation in Europe is Sophie's World, a novel by the Norwegian Jostein Gaarder. Aimed at teenagers, this is a long, educational fairy tale designed to teach them the entire history of Western philosophy. Sophie, the heroine, finds her life taken over by a man — Alberto Knox — who is driven by an inexplicable desire to make her learn philosophy. Sophie's constant complaint is that she is not taught anything like this at school. The dull

routine of her school work is contrasted with the wonders Knox has to impart.

The males may still be dead, white and European, but Gaarder's message reveals a virtuous Scandinavian glow when Alberto Knox apologises to Sophie for the complete lack of women in his history, explaining how oppressed they have been down the years, and when modern environmentalism is treated very much as a new and distinct philosophical development.

Gaarder skirts round all the really deep contemporary waters and simply allows his history to peter out into a general warm glow of environmentalism and political hope. For his purposes this does not matter. He simply wants to enthuse people; once inspired they can pick up where he leaves off. This has clearly worked in the sense that the success of the novel indicates a hunger for big ideas in acceptable packages.

In this new age where technological and cultural change is both rapid and total, people are both bored and anxious. This boredom stems from the fact that, after the cold war, although history may not be at an end, it is certainly slumbering. The anxiety arises from a fear of discontinuity as the past is being obliterated. Life may be comfortable, but it does not make sense. Then Gaarder appears with his strange novel offering big things to think about and the warm, agreeable assertion that the past is alive and well. Sophie's world is better than ours. It makes sense, it fills your mind.

JTV CHANNEL 2 WEEKLY PREVIEW

Thursday, Dec. 22

8:30 N.B.A.

8:30 The Road To Avonlea

Felicity's Challenge

Felicity tries to make up for the hurt she has caused to her friend Klitmie.

9:10 Tequila And Boozetti

10:00 News In English

10:20 Feature Film — Ordinary People

Sunday, Dec. 25

7:30 Coach

8:00 Silent Night-Holy Night

A Christmas Concert

8:30 Quantum Leap

9:10 Galactica

Space Ball

Two air-pilots are exiled in space after being deprived of needed energy and oxygen.

10:00 News In English

10:20 Feature Film — The Little Match Girl

On Christmas Eve, a little girl plays a major role in stopping a greedy rich man from carrying out a malicious scheme.

Friday, Dec. 23

7:30 Hollywood Stuntmakers

8:30 African Skies

Margo and Rory stumble upon a hidden band of desperate children orphaned by parents who have died of AIDS.

8:30 You Bet Your Life

9:00 P.M. Magazine

9:30 Heart Of Courage

10:00 News In English

10:20 Blanche

Blanche finds her mission to ease the suffering of those that the great depression of the thirties has transformed into destitutes.

11:10 Never The Twain

Settled Out Of Court

Simon and Oliver fall out after they get snared in a trickery.

Saturday, Dec. 24

7:30 The Nanny

The Christmas Story

Fran, a feisty, opinionated New Yorker, upsets the cool serene household of a successful Broadway producer when she becomes nanny to his three children.

8:00 Innovation

8:30 Quantum Leap

9:10 Murder She Wrote

Where Have U Gone Billy Boy

An actor is taken into custody after being charged with murder.

10:00 News In English

10:20 Feature Film — One Magic Christmas

Starring: Mary Steenburgen & Arthur Hill

With no money, a husband in the hospital, and a missing daughter, Gianey is at the end of her rope. That's until her very own guardian angel, Gideon, gives her a chance to rediscover the beauty of Christmas.

12:00 The Christmas Miracle

Christmas Carols

12:30 Major Dad

Major Moonlighting

John has no other choice but to get another job in order to stop a financial crisis.

Tuesday, Dec. 27

7:30 Practical Guide To The Universe

8:00 F.B.I.: The Untold Stories

8:30 Quantum Leap

9:15 Documentary — The Deep Probe

10:00 News In English

10:20 First Circle

11:10 The Piglet Files

Fair Exchange

Peter Chapman's house is taken over by Aliens as a safe house to hide a Russian defector. Unfortunately, it is not as safe as they think.

Wednesday, Dec. 28

7:30 Home Improvement

8:00 Life In The Freezer

8:30 Quantum Leap

9:10 Law And Order

10:00 News In English

10:20 Prism

10:40 Snowy River

11:10 Coming Of Age

The father refuses to stay with his daughter after he decides to get married.

Greenland relaunches Santa with humanitarian role

By Christopher Follett
Reuter

COPENHAGEN — Ice-bound Greenland is relaunching Santa Claus as a humanitarian crusader for the world's deprived children.

The aim is partly to underline Greenland's claim as the true home of father Christmas and partly to boost the island's tourist trade.

"Greenland's Father Christmas has an image problem," said Jens Veino, chairman of the Santa Claus of Greenland Foundation. "We have to make him and his homeland better known to the world outside."

"We must not forget Father Christmas is primarily associated with being good to children, so we want our Santa to sup-

port charities for sick, handicapped and homeless children all over the world," he said.

The foundation, studying a new strategy for revamping Santa with an array of Disney-style marketing techniques, aims to collect over 50 million crowns (\$8 million) a year for children's charities.

The idea would be to link the familiar red-robed figure with Greenland by stressing the nearby North Pole as his only home and blending the Santa theme with Eskimo culture and ice-bound landscapes to attract tourists.

Greenland, an Arctic province of Denmark, insists it is the only true home of Santa Claus and its Santa Post Office answers 125,000 letters a year from children all over

the world who write to Father Christmas C/O North Pole, Greenland.

But Finnish Lapland, Sweden, Norway and Iceland also claim to be the true land of Father Christmas and tempers can run high on the issue among normally peaceful Nordic people.

Finland's Santa was banned for years from attending the annual Father Christmas World Congress traditionally held in Copenhagen in sweltering July heat.

"The Finns' Santa is super-commercial. We want Greenland's Santa to have a more charitable profile and actually do good things for children," Mr. Veino said.

With a recession-ridden economy suffering from declining fish catches, inaccessible Greenland needs to find new sources of income but has been losing ground to Finland in the lucrative and competitive Santa Claus tour-

ism trade. So fierce is the dispute over Santa that it once surfaced at a summit meeting of Nordic prime ministers.

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The folklore behind Santa, yule logs and mistletoe

NEW YORK (AP) — Ever wonder why Santa Claus chooses the chimney instead of the door? And what's the myth behind mistletoe, anyway?

For answers, look to the folklore of ancient cultures. When the days grew shorter under winter's chilly grip, secular ceremonies emphasized fire and light. Over time, they became associated with the religious themes of Christmas.

"So many early cultures had festivals surrounding the winter solstice of light overcoming darkness," said Dr. Donald Dossey, author of the book *Holiday Folklore, Phobias and Fun*.

Bonfires were a universal way to combat the darkness. Norsemen called their winter festival Yuletide, and they burned yule logs.

"They helped good spirits see their way and scared away the evil. Can-

dles and lights on trees today are really symbols of those early bonfires," said Dossey, a psychologist from Asheville, North Carolina.

The prevalence of winter festivals helps explain why Dec. 25 was chosen as Christmas Day. Some scholars say Jesus Christ was actually born in the spring, when shepherds tended their flocks. But the Catholic Church merged older customs into

the religious events of Christmas. "When Christianity began less than 2,000 years ago, it had no history. So this female figure, whose name is the basis for the word hearth, was precursor of Santa Claus.

Then there's mistletoe, a parasite that grows on fir trees. The Druids, a Celtic religious order of priests and soothsayers, believed it was a symbol of peace for a bird called the mistle thrush to carry the plant in its claws.

They believed a sprig of mistle thrush toe, or mistletoe, could make warriors drop their weapons and hug each other. The kissing custom evolved from that.

If you bang a stocking up on Christmas Eve, thank St. Nicholas, a 4th century figure and another early form of Santa Claus. St. Nick provided for the three daughters of a nobleman, placing gold by their beds for their wed-

ding dowries. But one time he slipped, and gold fell into a stocking hung up to dry.

Santa Claus came in all

sorts of variations, and even used a donkey and wagon in the earliest legends. He was first depicted as a merry, corpulent figure in Clement Clark Moore's 1823 poem *A Visit From St. Nicholas*.

"None of this takes away from the true spirit and intent of all of our ancestors," Dossey said. "That was giving thanks, being joyful that light can overcome darkness, evil can overcome good, there can be peace on earth."

A long way to go

Series Of Studies In Jordanian Theatre

By Mufeed Hawamdeh (Ph.D.)

Drama in Jordan is a relatively new cultural phenomenon which did not reach the level of drama in the West. It needs a long way to go to achieve that level, yet there are continuous efforts to develop it to the better. The lack of theatrical criticism and archiving is part of the problem because qualified criticism adds to the quality of the text and theatrical show and archiving denotes the progress or retiring of theatrical works within a certain period of time. Mufeed Hawamdeh who is an associate professor of English at Yarmouk University took upon himself the task of promoting both criticism and archiving of Jordanian theatre. He started since 1984 a series of studies about theatre in Jordan for Jordanian Studies Centre at Yarmouk University that deals with playwrights, directors and actors. He has published five books so far and the rest will follow. The first book of this series is a critical study of local theatre, its link with Arabic theatre in general and evaluation as to world theatre. In this book he does not just point out the problems facing the theatrical movement but goes on to describe appropriate solutions to those problems. His experience in Shakespearean theatre in particular and in the advanced Western theatre in general qualifies him to carry on this burden. It contains four chapters that deal with the problem of theatre in the Arab World, a study in regard to theatre from a folkloric perspective, a description of the new movement in experimental theatre and the contribution of Yarmouk University in theatrical labs. It also includes three of the plays enacted in 1984.

The second, the third and the fourth he designated to documenting the Jordanian theatre. "This book strives for accomplishing Jordanian theatre encyclopedia planned to embrace the overall theatrical activity in Jordan since the dawn of this century," Hawamdeh says and goes on to say in his introduction: "It contains documents and information which the researcher believes they are sufficient and precise about more than a hundred theatrical shows enacted on Jordanian theatre. Others are still subject to research and investigation that shall be published

when the relevant data from their sources are available." The names of plays are arranged alphabetically to facilitate study. The book contains also photographs of stickers, placards and tickets which Hawamdeh considers an important wealth as the pictures of placards and stickers register many and varied styles of designs and to have them in the book enables designers to view them in a comparable, comprehensive frame "so as to incite people in the theatre to take interest in this documentary aspect in order to make them seek precision as to the information included in their placards to facilitate future research," as Hawamdeh puts it. Because there does not exist a concrete source comprising the primary information about theatrical work and literature that students may rely on in this vital sphere of the national culture, Hawamdeh has decided to take this hard path and to start from zero by accumulating texts and documents relating to the national theatre. The fifth book *Efforts Of Jordanian Theatre* aims at identifying people in the Jordanian theatre — playwrights, directors, actors and technicians. The book arranges their names in alphabetical order and comprises a precise account of their participations.

Hawamdeh's insight and knowledge about theatre is broad and deep enabling him to correctly trail the



positive or the negative sides of both the text and the show, the ins and outs of the world of theatre. His language is an academic language but devoid of rigidity that usually accompanies such researches.

Muhammad Daoud Tahboub

A great persuader

Freya Stark In The Levant

By Malise Ruthven

Garnet Publishing, Reading, England 1994, £20

Freya Stark was a great traveller and almost always took her camera, usually a Leica III, with her. Her curiosity about people and places and sense of style were reflected in her photography as well as in her prose. She grouped her subjects, whether human or topographical, in the most seemly arrangement. She also had, as Malise Ruthven says in his excellent introduction, "the ability to talk people into letting her photograph them." She was a great persuader, and nobody really minded being persuaded by her cheerful persistence.

Freya Stark bequeathed her huge collection of some 50,000 photographs to the Middle East Centre at St. Antony's College, Oxford. From these Ruthven has chosen a representative selection, grouped by countries — Lebanon, Syria, Jordan and Palestine. That leaves Persia, Iraq, Turkey, Arabia and Yemen, where so much of her long career lay, still, it must be hoped, to come. But this handsome volume gives a taste of the rich archive which records a world that has been greatly changed, and much of it destroyed, by half a century of war, civil strife, tourism and progress — Middle East International.

E.C. Hodgkin

Purification of the soul

Torture And Modernity: Self, Society And State In Modern Iran

By Darius Rejali

Westview Press, Oxford, England 1994, £26.50/£13.50 (pb)

There is nothing rare, Western, Muslim or specifically modern about torture, as we should hardly need reminding. This ambitious book, explains Darius Rejali, lecturer in political philosophy at Reed College in the U.S., is about torturers and the world they live in, focusing on shifting practices of torture and the process of modernisation in Iran. It is a study written in the shadow of Michel Foucault, though not uncritically.

The author of this original and disturbing book has made a serious investigation of the practice of torture in modern Iran and how it has evolved. It contains a remarkable series of old photographs in an appendix not added for voyeuristic reasons but because they add substantially to the points made in the main text.

The elaborate ceremonial public displays of torture under the Qajars evolved into a private business, involving the victim and one or two specialists, in Savak's buildings or in basements of prisons. The difference, judges Rejali, is that this is clinical, not ritual torture. The torturer operates on his patient. His methods and instruments are drawn from medicine, engineering, psychology and physiology. "Not for nothing did the security police under the late shah claim to have a higher number of PhD's than any other branch of government in Iran."

Among the many tortured under the shah's regime were the famous playwright Gholam Husayn Saedi and novelist Reza Baraheni. The experience marked their work, with Baraheni, for example, maintaining (in *The Crowned Cannibals*) that torture is the extension of sexual repression in Iranian society.

There are many elements in contemporary Iran common to other totalitarian states. Discipline and obedience of citizens are key goals of the system. The ideal citizen in the Islamic Republic, in theory at least, acts as "the eyes and ears of the state," as model Soviet children in the Stalin era were meant to do in the USSR.

Rejali does stress that concern with moral corruption represents an important continuity between the shah's regime and that of the clergy currently ruling Iran. Yet there are surprising limits placed on discussion of the wider context of Iranian culture itself. The traditional flagellation and other self-tortures inflicted by Shi'ite men willingly on themselves at Muharram, in grisly public displays of their devotion, continued until outlawed under Reza Shah.

Again, the cultural aspect is very relevant to education. A recent study by Rasool Nafisi (Iran: Political Culture in the Islamic Republic, Routledge 1993) elaborates the hold of the mullahs through school textbooks, gloomy and doctrinaire, with death and martyrdom prominent. He states: "The clergy, aware of the numbing effects of death, and the fear and fascination evinced by martyrdom, uses this psychological game quite effectively. In this context, death becomes the rule, while life, as stated frequently by the clergy, is just a transitory stage, meant for purification of the soul."

Much of Rejali's book tests current Western theories about the reemergence and spread of torture in recent decades against the experience of modern

BOOK REVIEW

Iran. In so doing, he reveals much about Iran, as well as ideas about torture and crime and punishment in society — Middle East International.

Anthony Hyman

Nationalist endeavours

Syria's Quest For Independence 1939-1945

By Salma Mardam Bey

Garnet Publishing, Reading, England 1994, £30

The early years of Syria's modern history have been of renewed interest as new sources have become available. The latest contribution is Salma Mardam Bey's book in which she uses her collection of her father's papers to give a detailed account of relations between Syrian nationalist leaders and Britain and France in the years leading up to the French withdrawal in 1945.

Jamil Mardam Bey was one of the leading figures in the struggle for Syrian independence. He began his political activities in 1911 when he joined an Arab anti-Ottoman secret society in Paris and was appointed deputy foreign minister in King Faisal's short-lived Kingdom in 1920. Under the Mandate he took a prominent role in negotiating Syria's independence from France and led the country to independence as foreign minister and acting prime minister in 1945. He took up the premiership again in 1946 but resigned two years later and left Syria for Cairo. Thereafter he took more detached view of events in his homeland, formally announcing his retirement from public life in 1954. He died in 1960.

His daughter uses British Foreign Office and French Foreign Ministry documents as well as collections of private papers (both those belonging to her father and to the late Sir Edward Spears) to detail the twists and turns of Franco-Syrian relations. These events have been outlined by previous researchers but the addition of Mardam's papers gives the Syrian perspective on events as well as providing new details of the negotiating strategies.

The author takes a firmly nationalist perspective, claiming that "Syria's example was an inspiration to others under foreign rule." She unreservedly backs Jamil Mardam's complaint, namely that the French under Charles De Gaulle and General Beynet were set on provoking confrontation while the nationalists were eager to avoid a clash. She also argues that Britain should not receive credit for ousting the French. She maintains that British policy was confused, with Churchill reprimanding Spears for his active anti-French stance. Furthermore, London, already dependent on Washington, was concerned to get American approval before sending in troops to halt the French assault on Damascus.

Salma Mardam's book provides much new material on early modern Syrian history and is a valuable addition to the literature on the topic. It is now to be hoped that she will use her father's papers to shed more light on the post-1945 period when Jamil Mardam played a central role as the new state struggled to find its feet in a hostile international environment — Middle East International.

Andrew Rathmell

Atlanta Olympics

IOC limits Jordan's delegation to 6 athletes

By Aileen Bannayan
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — The number of Jordanian athletes who will represent the Kingdom at the 1996 Olympic Games has been narrowed down to only six and even they will have to attend a six month training programme to qualify for the event.

In an interview with the Jordan Times, Dr. Mouaffaq Al Fawwaz, the secretary-general of the Jordan Olympic Committee (JOC), expressed his dissatisfaction at the way current Olympics officials were violating the spirit of the Olympic charter by placing varied limitations that would hinder the participation of developing countries.

"This attitude is violating the universality of the games. The Olympics are meant to bring together athletes from all over the world. To break cultural barriers, and create more understanding between different nations" he noted.

Dr. Fawwaz and Minister of Youth Fawwaz Abul Ghanam just returned from Atlanta after representing Jordan at the

general assembly of the Association of National Olympic Committees (ANOC) where over 1,000 delegates from 196 countries attended the meetings. They also toured the site of the Games and attended meetings of the Olympic Council of Asia (OCA).

The International Olympic Committee (IOC) has already begun its countdown for the Games. Final preparations for venues, security and a host of other issues are being finalised. In addition, the maximum number of athletes has been set at 10,000, thus placing a clear limitation on the number of athletes from each country.

Dr. Fawwaz said that developing countries whose athletes do not sometimes meet eligibility requirements because of their records were given the chance to participate with six athletes provided they represent different sports.

However the IOC has given these countries a chance to upgrade their standards by providing their top six athletes with six-month training programmes whose cost will be totally covered by the

international body.

The IOC will cover expenses of lodging and participation of six athletes and two administrators at the Games. It will also raise its annual grant to the national Olympic committees. The JOC will receive \$15,000, in addition to \$36,000 for coaching programmes.

Dr. Fawwaz said that the JOC should ensure that the most promising athletes will represent the Kingdom and that respective sports federations will be asked very soon to make their choices so that athletes will have sufficient time to prepare.

"We have to make sure that we send the very best and qualified athletes to the IOC training programmes and then decide who will be eligible to go," Dr. Fawwaz added.

Dr. Fawwaz said that the OCA meetings concentrated on the doping issue especially after 11 members of the Chinese delegation at the Asian Games recently tested positive and were suspended.

Jordan had only one such case two years ago when a weightlifter tested positive and was later suspended. The exact details of the case were not disclosed but it later turned out that the athlete was given a muscle strengthening substance by his coach.

The Atlanta Olympics will be the fifth time Jordan takes part in the Summer Games, after taking part in the previous four events held in Barcelona, Seoul, Los Angeles and Moscow.

PARIS (AFP) — From the start Martina Navratilova was always going to be the major story in women's tennis in 1994.

The Czech-born American, facing a 38th birthday in October and having dominated the game for more than two decades, made it clear in January that she intended to retire at the end of the year — come what May.

Her first season reaped one more title, a victory at the Paris Indoor Open in February, to swell her astonishing record total of career singles wins to 167, but her bid for a tenth Wimbledon crown just failed.

Playing in her 22nd consecutive campaign at the All England Club, Navratilova surged through to the final, but hopes of a fairy tale ending were thwarted when she lost to surprise opponent Conchita Martinez. The Spaniard, who had also beaten Navratilova in the Italian Open final two months earlier, scored a 6-4, 3-6, 6-3 win.

Navratilova, who won 55 Grand Slam titles and who reigned as world number-one for a record 332 consecutive weeks back in 1982, was still ranked eighth when she made an emotional farewell at the WTA's end-of-season Championships at Madison Square Garden where she was beaten in the first round by eventual winner Gabriela Sabatini.

Steffi Graf, still carrying the credibility of women's tennis largely single-handed after the stabbing on court of arch-rival Monica Seles in Hamburg in April 1993, started the year like an express train.

With Seles absent, Navratilova retiring and Graf showing signs of wear and tear, the season was marked by a search for new stars.

The big-hitting, 18-year-old Pierce who had separated from her controversial and often violent father twelve

WOMEN'S TENNIS 1994

Navratilova takes her final bow; Spanish players enjoy marvellous season

months before, looked as though she might fit the bill.

Formerly tense and unsuited, the Canadian-born French number-one turned up at Roland Garros with new American coach Nick Bollettieri looking a completely different player.

That was when things began to go wrong.

A shock first-round defeat at Wimbledon against the experienced American Lori McNeil was followed by a decision to skip the Federation Cup finals in Frankfurt, and although the German player stormed back to win San Diego in August by outplaying major rival Arantxa Sanchez 6-2, 6-1 — the Spaniard got her own back by beating Graf in the final at the United States Open the following month.

For the rest of the season Graf struggled. Back and foot injuries aggravated her bid to recapture her form and she lost again to Pierce in the semi-finals at the WTA Championships.

Spanish players enjoyed a marvellous season.

Apart from winning the French Open, Wimbledon and the United States Open between them, Sanchez and Martinez joined forces to retain the Federation Cup — beating the United States 3-0 in the final inside Frankfurt's Waldstadion without dropping a set.

Reports that one of the newspapers was planning to smuggle the father, a convicted bank robber who was banned from attending all tournaments after being ejected from the 1993 French Open, into the All England Club proved to be the final straw. Pierce withdrew and went into hiding with her French mother Yannick.

Many top players were openly sceptical about Pierce's motives and Billie Jean King led an ugly slur campaign by openly accusing the teenager of withdrawing

because she couldn't play on grass.

There were fears for the health of young players joining the tour too soon, prompted by the shock decline of Olympic champion Jennifer Capriati.

Capriati, who had joined the tour as a 14-year-old, stopped playing after losing in the first round of the United States Open but reports filtered through that things were not what they should be.

First the 18-year-old American was arrested for shoplifting and then on drugs.

Capriati's problems prompted the WTA to announce the raising of the age limit for players to join the tour. From 1995, players will only be allowed to play on the tour on an unrestricted basis when they are 18.

The deadline for the rule-change prompted two 14-year-olds to make their professional debuts.

Switzerland's Martina Hingis, twice the French Open junior champion, joined the tour at Zurich in October and by the end of the season she had already risen to 87th in the rankings.

The other newcomer was 6ft 2inch American Venus Williams who had apparently turned professional against the wishes of her parents.

Williams, brought up in a tough Los Angeles ghetto and with an equally promising younger sister Serena in the pipeline, hadn't played a tournament since she was 11 years old. But she exploded on the scene in Oakland in November by beating the experienced 25-year-old Shanti Stafford in the first round and then led Sanchez 6-2, 3-1 in the second, before losing concentration and eleven games in a row.

Jana Novotna, who had

made the headlines in 1993 by weeping on the shoulder of the Duchess of Kent after losing the Wimbledon final, nursed a recurring shoulder injury for much of the season. But the Czech player finished fourth in the rankings after an excellent late season in which she won three straight tournaments (Eisen, Leipzig and Brighton) and reached the quarter-finals at the WTA Championships.

One of the year's brightest prospects was the powerful 6ft 2inch, 18-year-old American Lindsay Davenport — a quarter-finalist at Wimbledon and finalist at the ATP Championships. Davenport, who also led the United States to the Federation Cup final, had put her education first and graduated from Murrieta Valley High School to be a late-starter in professional tennis in February 1993. But she made up for lost time and finished the season in sixth place in the rankings.

Japan also had a "top-talent" player in Kimiko Date who completed another successful season at world number-nine. Date reached the semi-finals at the ATP Championships, which provided the biggest surprise and probably most popular winner of the season in Gabriela Sabatini.

The glamorous 24-year-old South American, written off as an "also-ran" after another winless year, brought the curtain down with a stunning victory at Madison Square Garden. It was Sabatini's first victory on the tour since her triumph at the Italian Open in May 1992.

The season also saw the retirement of Tracy Austin. The 31-year-old, who became the youngest player to win the United States Open in 1979 as a 16-year-old before being plagued by injuries.

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The Episcopal Church in Amman and Aqaba Christmas Services in English

Amman: English language Anglican services are held at the Church of the Redeemer, First Circle, near the Alhiyah School. Telephone 652265.

Saturday 24th December, Christmas Eve 4:00 p.m. Crib Service for Children.

11:15 p.m. Midnight Mass.

Sunday 25th December, Christmas Day.

11:00 a.m. Joint English and Arabic Eucharist.

AQABA: At the Missions to Seamen Church. Telephone 3184167.

Saturday 24th December, Christmas Eve 11:30 p.m. Midnight Mass.

Sunday 25th December, Christmas Day. 10:00 a.m. Eucharist both in English.

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Invitation For Bids

Mafraq Water System Rehabilitation Project Contracts Central No. 161/94 (Modified)

1. The Water Authority of the Ministry of Water and Irrigation, through the Ministry of Public Works and Housing/Government Tenders Directorate, invites experienced foreign contractors from countries which meet the eligibility criteria of the European Investment Bank and local contractors who have been prequalified by the Ministry of Public Works and Housing as First Grade in Water and Sewerage, or a joint venture between eligible foreign and local contractors to submit their offers for the supply, delivery and construction of Mafraq Water Distribution System. Foreign contractors are strongly encouraged to joint venture or associate with the above graded local contractors.

2. The project is partially financed by (EIB).

3. The project consists of the supply and installation of water supply pipes with diameter varying from 19mm to 400mm, total length about 181 km.

4. Tender documents are available and may be examined and purchased the Government Tenders Directorate at the Ministry of Public Works and Housing in Amman: P.O.Box 1226 Tel. (+) 962 6 607 461, Fax (+) 962 6 606 751.

5. The non-refundable fee for each set of tender documents will be JD 500.

6. The latest date set for the purchase of tender documents by the eligible bidders is January 23rd, 1995.

7. A pre-bid conference will be held at the Water Authority's main offices in Amman at 900 hour, Jordan local time, on Monday 23rd January 1995.

8. Bids are due not later than 1200 hours, Jordan Local Time, on Saturday, February 18th, 1995, to the office of the Government Tenders Directorate.

Eng. George Haddad
Chairman/Central Tenders Committee
General Director/Government Tenders
Directorate

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X-MAS MASS ON MOUNT NEBO

Christmas Eve Mass will be celebrated at the Memorial of Moses on Mount Nebo by the Franciscan Community on Saturday 24th December at 8:00 p.m.

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A K 7 2
♦ 4 3
♦ 5 2

WEST
♦ K J 8 2
8 5
K 10 8 6
♦ 10 9 6

EAST
♦ 7 4 3
Q J 10 9 4
Q 5
♦ 7 6 4 3

SOUTH
A A Q 10
6 5
♦ 5 2
♦ A K Q J

The bidding:

South: West: North: East:

1 Pass
3 NT
Pass
Pass

Opening lead: Ten of ♦.

Reaching the right contract is only part of the battle. To complete the victory you have to fulfil the contract.

South's hand is the type that gives most players grey hairs.

South's opening bid was probably ignore the weak doubleton in hearts and open two no trump (21-22 points), but we have no quarrel with South's method of handling the problem. That's not the case

with the play.

Declarer on the opening lead performed, entered dummy with the king of hearts and finessed the ten of spades. West won with the jack and returned a club. Declarer now crossed to the table with the remaining high card and tried another spade finesse. When that, too, failed, he had more than eight tricks to be had.

Declarer was unlucky to find both spade honors wrong. East was a 3-to-1 favorite to hold one. And yes, double dummy the hand can be made by stripping West of exits and in hearts. That's the best bid for the first spade finesse. But there is a sure-trick line for the contract—the ninth trick is right under your nose.

The key card is dummy's nine of spades. That can be established by force. After winning the first trick, declarer should simply play the ace and queen of spades. When declarer regains the lead, the ten of spades forces out the jack and the nine is high. That's the entry in dummy. In all, declarer collects two spade tricks, two hearts, at least one diamond and four clubs. That's nine tricks any way you count them.



New Year's Eve

Gala dinner

Masquerade

at the

ROZENA INN</p

Chechenya's fate could see reversal of fortunes

(Continued from page 6)

expertise to forecast that the largest mass of unemployed will be concentrated in the north Caucasus in the foreseeable future. We could logically conclude, therefore, that the conflicts in the north Caucasus have been and will continue to be a struggle for land. What we expect to see is a continuing aggravation of the ethno-demographic pressures in the north Caucasus causing ever increasing tensions and consternation to the parliament of all Russia. Caucasian strife have proven difficult to resolve. They do not allow for formulation of traditional solutions. Caucasian regional conflicts will inevitably lead to destabilisation of federal policies, be they economic or political.

What can Russia do if some or all of these observations prove true?

I do not propose a total severance of the Caucasian republics and regions from Russia. There are positive aspects resulting from a long historic association. I do not propose that Russia sit back and passively watch these conflicts develop. What I propose is a new approach to the north Caucasus which takes into account the ethno-demographic realities, an approach which allows them maximum economic and political independence. Russia could play a constructive part in creating a north Caucasian economic/political federation. On their own, the five existing small republics have no economic or political muscle to contribute constructively to the Russian Federation. On the contrary, they represent an ongoing and increasing drain on its federal budget. There are no real long-term advantages for Russia to hold the north Caucasian republics under central con-

trol. The strategic considerations of the cold war era are no longer paramount. As an independent economic entity, with the pooling of resources and industrial development, with total flexibility to create such lucrative industries as tourism with direct foreign investments (without the discouraging centralised bureaucratic paper-chase in Moscow) these multi-ethnic republics could quickly become self-sufficient and contribute to a healthier Russian Federation. They could also improve the living standards of their own people and address the crippling unemployment looming in the horizon.

Gradual change will inevitably allow a new cadre of management to exercise true economic reform. Such change can be peaceful and constructive under democratic procedures. All the north Caucasian republics have elected governments and practise democratic elections. The challenges ahead should produce the kind of leadership required to accomplish these changes in an open society. What is mandatory is wise direction, legal framework and proper guidelines from the federal parliament.

What are the alternatives? The Chechenya war and other similar conflicts will inevitably lead to emergency autocratic measures leading to abolition of elections and the elimination of democratic and "reform" institutions. The worst possible outcome would be a return to dictatorship.

The writer, who just finished a trilogy "Kavkaz," published in Russia, is a management consultant with business links to Russia and the Caucasus countries. He contributed the above article to the Jordan Times.

Yeltsin offers deal to Grozny

(Continued from page 1)

that once the crisis was over those who had fled Grozny could return without hindrance.

Russian Foreign Minister Andrei Kozyrev was also in conciliatory mood, promising the Chechens that they would enjoy all the rights of subjects of the Russian Federation "once elections have taken place."

He told a news conference in Moscow that the Russian constitution provided for wide powers for local government "to say nothing of the possibilities offered by the federation treaty."

Outside Grozny, Chechen volunteers wrapped up against the cold to man hastily dug trenches and bunkers. They said they were ready to hole up overnight in case the Russian troops moved in. "I got my warm clothes out, bought a Kalashnikov on the market and came out

here," said Akhmed, a Grozny resident standing beside a bunker in the village of Shaami Yurt about 30 kilometres west of the centre of Grozny.

An elderly villager standing beside him backed him. "Our ancestors were fighting the Russian for 300 years and we can do the same," he said.

In the capital, a town of 40,000 people before refugees flooded out to escape the fighting, the mood was calm. "Chechenya is subject only to Allah," read one banner fluttering over the town.

In Geneva, the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) said on Wednesday at least 16,000 people had fled their homes due to fighting in Chechenya and warned the number of displaced people could rise sharply.

The sound of distant shelling echoed through the centre and Russian planes flew periodically overhead.

Deputies want to amend law

(Continued from page 1)

termine the number of Palestinians living in Jordan as well as their status as refugees or displaced persons.

Despite the government's efforts, the move puts the government under pressure to submit a bill to Parliament that accommodates the demands of the Lower House, Ms. Faisal said.

Constitutionally, the government should consider the amendments suggested by the Lower House, said one parliamentary expert. "But the government is not Constitutionally bound to stick with what is offered by the amendments — the government has the ability to manoeuvre and interpret the amendments, which is probably what they will do," he said.

According to the constitution, the proposal has to pass through a parliamentary committee, then through the House in

self before it is submitted to the government.

Additionally, Ms. Faisal said, she feared the government would hedge on redrawing constituencies by saying that geographic and demographic elements in the Kingdom make redrawing the constituencies impractical, or, that the government would say that redrawing the constituencies contradicts the new division of the Kingdom into the Lower House, Ms. Faisal said.

"People have to know that [the governors] do not have to be linked to the electoral law," she said. "There can be two separate divisions — one administrative and one political. Besides, the new divisions have no constitutional basis," she contended.

Although the amendments were officially submitted Dec. 7, the government has yet to publicly voice an opinion of the amendments.

"It seems they were taken by surprise," said Ms. Faisal. "And we are sure they did not like it."

Bahrain students protest

(Continued from page 12)

Tehran that riots had broken out in Jo prison in the south of the Gulf archipelago.

Majlis-e-Jahaneh-Ahlebeit, an organisation made up of powerful clergy and close to Iranian leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, blasted Bahrain for using "violent methods such as arrests, torture and killings" to stop the unrest.

Exhibit to acquaint West with modern Islamic culture

By Ian Atalla
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — For those living amidst Jordan's small, cozy and comfortably apolitical art scene, the placid stillness of an exhibition hall would perhaps seem an unlikely launching pad for crusades on behalf of Third World social causes.

During this century, both native and colonial governments in the Third World have seen the works of some artists as instigating enough to punish them with jail or worse. But in this day of satellite TV dishes, laserdisk and other high-velocity media, the painter's canvas would seem to come in a second second.

This viewpoint is not being shared by some Arab intellectuals living in the West. Less than a year after a group of Arab-American artists launched the 70-artist mega-exhibit "Forces of Change" in Washington, D.C., in an effort to confront western stereotypes about the lives of Middle Eastern women, an art institute in Kassel, Germany, is gearing up to launch an even more ambitious project in a similar vein. Entitled "Encountering the Contemporary Islamic Culture," it aims to acquaint Europeans with the vast complexities of modern Islamic culture currently hidden behind "the news they hear daily about fundamentalists," project director Hamdi Itar told the Jordan Times.

"We are in constant touch now with 45 embassies in Bonn" as part of preparations for the exhibit, says the bespectacled Egyptian, who is director of Kassel University's Institute for Studies of

the Modern Arts. He was in Amman on Thursday to meet with Jordan's artists and inform them about the exhibit, as well as encourage their participation in it.

The institute's attempt to leap over the iron-plated walls of prejudice standing unbudged between East and West. Dr. Itar told the Jordan Times, comes out of a firm conviction that "through culture you can build a bridge for dialogue."

The scale of the exhibit's theme and size is impressive as well. The target is to exhibit roughly 400 works by 100 artists from 28 nations throughout Asia and Africa. Such ambitious East-West cultural bridging projects often create quite a splash, with numerous press releases commanding the brave vision of their initiators. Then, after the initial temporary enthusiasm, the major body of western public opinion always seems to remain firmly cemented in place.

Dr. Itar said he had no illusions that the exhibit would be an earthshaker, even though the institute has spent over two years planning and organising for it.

"We have been exerting such efforts at the institute for 20 years," he said. "We know very well that it would be an illusion to think we can change everything in a short time — but we can be sure the exhibit will give people who see it something to think about."

Ironically enough, when scholars from both East and West gather for a seminar the institute will stage alongside the exhibit when it opens in August 1995, it may come to prove it is not only western

His answer was straightforward. With the vast array of topics on the subject which still remain unexplored by eastern as well as western scholars, "we simply do not know. For now, we can only ask."

Participants reported that during the closed-door meeting, Mr. Merimee said that the council adopted a formal statement recognising the progress made by Iraq in disarming and asking Baghdad to cooperate further.

"The council should react and tell the situation as it is in order to encourage Iraq to continue as far as the positive aspects are concerned and to warn it to do better as far as the negative are concerned," said French envoy Jean-

Bernard Merimee.

Participants reported that during the closed-door meeting, Mr. Merimee said that the council adopted a formal statement recognising the progress made by Iraq in disarming and asking Baghdad to cooperate further.

The French delegation said the negligible quantities of arms which Iraq might have are being destroyed immediately by the U.N. commission and are not militarily significant.

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OECD sees three per cent growth at turn of century

PARIS (R) — The world's rich nations should start the next century with average economic growth of around three per cent, but will continue to suffer from heavy national debt burdens and high unemployment, the OECD has said.

It said in its semi-annual outlook that a projection forward of its latest forecasts into the next five or six years showed steady growth, with low inflation of around 2.5 per cent.

But unemployment in the 25 members of the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) would remain high, at an average seven per cent by the year 2000.

Employment growth of one per cent a year would be offset by an increase in the size of the labour force of

slightly less than one per cent, allowing joblessness to fall overall by just one percentage point from 1994.

In Europe, which suffers the highest rates of unemployment, joblessness would fall by around two percentage points, but remain at a high 9.5 per cent.

It said the pattern of growth would be different between North America, Europe and Asia, with the United States growth rate peaking first and then slowing to around 2.5 per cent.

European growth would be strong through to 1996, before slowing to an average 4.75 per cent, while in Japan, growth would accelerate to around 4.25 per cent a year in 1998, before slowing to an underlying potential rate of three per cent.

The OECD's medium-

term forecasts are based on a simple forward projection of its short-term outlook and assume there are no major structural reforms, nor big changes in exchange rates or commodity prices in the years ahead.

But only four of the EU's current members — Germany, France, Britain and Luxembourg — would be able to meet the Maastricht treaty's requirement that total debt should be less than 60 per cent of GDP.

Under the 1992 treaty, at least eight countries must meet the deficit criteria by 1997 if a single European currency is to be introduced that year.

The OECD also said Europe was likely to have to raise short-term interest rates temporarily to deal with a slight pick-up in inflation, notably in Germany, in 1996.

OECD: British growth stable in '95; inflation, interest rising

LONDON (R) — Britain's economy will grow at a stable rate next year but slow to three per cent in 1996 while interest rates and inflation are both set to increase, the OECD's semi-annual report said.

The Paris-based Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) said Britain's recovery from recession became more firmly established and more broadly based in 1994 but warned John Major's Conservative government to keep a lid on inflation.

"The authorities will need to remain vigilant against the possibility of a picking in inflation," the latest outlook from the OECD, which groups the world's 25 richest nations, said.

Inflation — which rose to an underlying 2.3 per cent in November from October's 2.7 per cent, of 2.0 per cent — was projected to rise to three per cent by 1996, the OECD said.

The OECD makes no forecast for the underlying gauge. It gauges inflation by the GDP deflator — average measures of price rises on all goods and services which make up GDP but also take into account the changing pattern of demand.

Britain's gross domestic product (GDP) grew at an annual rate of 4.2 per cent by September 1994, reflecting an increase in net exports and investment that helped to offset the impact of tax hikes on consumption, such as duties on petrol and alcohol.

But the OECD expected the pace of GDP growth to slow in the fourth quarter to end 1994 at about 3.5 per cent. It also projected growth next year to remain virtually unchanged at 3.4 per cent, easing to three per cent in 1996 in response to further

fiscal restraint and expected higher interest rates.

"To slow down growth to a more sustainable rate further action would be needed next year," the OECD's chief economist, Kuniharu Shigebara told a news conference in Paris.

The report said short-term interest rates, which increased by half a point to 6.25 per cent on Dec. 7, were projected to reach seven per cent by the end of 1995 and 7.5 per cent in 1996 — well above peak rates seen in previous cycles.

"Controlling inflation may be possible with lower interest rates than in the past, as monetary and fiscal policies have been tightened much earlier in the cycle," it added.

The OECD estimated that in 1994 there was an output gap — the difference between actual and potential output — of some four per cent and this would narrow further in 1995 and 1996, provided inflation remains subdued and growth in demand slows.

The OECD said unemployment in Britain was set to continue its downward trend, falling to slightly below eight per cent by the end of 1996. November's jobless total fell 43,400 to 2,471 million, or 8.8 per cent of the workforce, down from 8.9 per cent in October, according to official figures released last week.

Mr. Shigebara said the government's labour reforms of recent years had cut the "natural rate of unemployment", but said that the long-term jobless rate of 3.7 per cent is still too high.

The think tank also expected the government's net borrowing, excluding privatisation proceeds, would fall from seven per cent in 1994 to three and one quarter per cent of GDP in 1996.

DEFINING STYLE

It is important to know when to elaborate on simplicity

DAJANI'S

Gold & Gems Jewelry

6th Circle, Amra Hotel Shops, Amman.

HOROSCOPE

FORECAST FOR THURSDAY, DECEMBER 22, 1994

By Thomas S. Pearson, Astrologer, Carroll Righter Foundation

GENERAL TENDENCIES. This morning are you able to put your ideas across in a well rounded fashion but later on as the Moon squares Pluto your big plans conflict with other details that have been awaiting your attention.

ARIES: (March 21 to April 19) Study whatever will help you to advance and be practical. Contact as many friends as you can who can be assistance to you.

TAURUS: (April 20 to May 18) You are able to act speedily in any business or personal affairs and get good results. Show your name you are truly devoted.

GEMINI: (May 21 to June 18) Try to get your fellow associates to understand your idealistic concepts and come to a fine understanding with them for a new project.

MOON CHILDREN: (June 22 to July 21) You can get your regular tasks completed more efficiently today and are very alert. Use the cooperation you desire.

LEO: (July 22 to August 18) This is a good day to plan your social engagements for the days ahead, and then make phone calls to make some arrangements. Show that you are charming.

VIRGO: (August 19 to September 17) Make these changes at home which will improve its appearance and comfort and please the family. Make a good impression on others.

LIBRA: (September 21 to October 19) State to partners how you think operations can be improved and get their OK. Be careful of one who has an eye on your assets and how to get them.

SCORPIO: (October 23 to November 21) Be more direct when monetary matters are concerned, especially with advisors and benefactors. Improve your property for the future.

SAGITTARIUS: (November 22 to December 21) Look for more information from the right sources and be more aware of your true potentials. Get closer to the one you love.

CAPRICORN: (December 22 to January 19) Consider which friends can be of the greatest help to you now and contact them. Be willing to accept their assistance and suggestions.

AQUARIUS: (January 21 to February 18) Get your duties handled more efficiently and gain approval of the public in general. Enjoy the social side of life with good friends.

PISCES: (February 19 to March 18) This is a day for new ideas and goals which can help to advance you rapidly in your career. Your hunches are very good, so use them.

FORECAST FOR FRIDAY, DECEMBER 23, 1994

By Thomas S. Pearson, Astrologer, Carroll Righter Foundation

GENERAL TENDENCIES. If you schedule your time wisely you can handle both business and creative work ideally and still not neglect communications that are vital to your welfare. Improve relationships and gain added income.

ARIES: (March 21 to April 19) Contacting the most prominent people you know and gaining their backing is wise today. Be sure that you handle some civic matter wisely.

TAURUS: (April 20 to May 18) You understand what changes can be made which will give you greater financial security and more prosperity in the future.

GEMINI: (May 21 to June 18) Handle important business so that you can afford some expensive pleasure. Please the one you love by being more practical at this time.

MOON CHILDREN: (June 22 to July 21) If you are more straightforward with associates, they will help you to gain your goals more easily and with greater efficiency.

LEO: (July 22 to August 18) Be very practical in handling any outside affairs which crop up. Show that you are a person with real ability and a lot of hidden talents.

VIRGO: (August 19 to September 17) You are now inspired how to gain whatever you desire by using a more scientific method and you can be more successful by your efforts.

LIBRA: (September 21 to October 19) Study every phase of your practical needs, then confer with experts and find out how to gain them more easily and with more success.

SCORPIO: (October 23 to November 21) If you state your aims to fellow associates and daily allies, they will assist you in gaining them. Meet with utmost care today.

SAGITTARIUS: (November 22 to December 21) Concentrate on keeping work promises and this becomes a good and constructive day. Listen to the opinion of an expert who can help you.

CAPRICORN: (December 22 to January 19) This is a good day for you to engage in those activities which can bring you much happiness and pleasure for those under your roof.

AQUARIUS: (January 21 to February 18) A day to handle practical affairs and forget all that daydreaming. Be courteous and charming towards those who can be very helpful.

PISCES: (February 19 to March 18) A day to go after your personal aims and cleverly gain them. Improve your appearance, and be at your best especially around bigwigs.

Birthstone of December: Turquoise - Zircon

THE BETTER HALF

By Glasberg

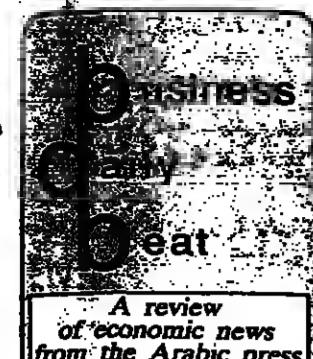


By Glasberg



By Glasberg

Business & Finance



Ministry of Supply to distribute U.S. rice

Minister of Supply Adel Qudah emphasised that the private sector will not be allowed to import basic foodstuffs especially rice, sugar and wheat. He said the private sector had been allowed to import some foodstuffs like chickpeas and powder milk and may be permitted to import lentils in light of local output. Mr. Qudah said his ministry has stopped importing frozen chicken and olive oil to give priority to local farmers to market their produce and has left the price of the two items to the mechanism of the market. The minister said that American rice was purchased recently and it will be distributed soon. As to the possibility of importing salt, the minister pointed out that the Al Azraq Society has a concession to supply the market with salt and that specialised committees are now reviewing the specifications of this product. Asked about prices of car spare parts, the minister said that a new formula was being worked out to fix the prices in light of the reduction in customs tariffs (Al Dustour).

According to an official source, prices of vegetables and fruits will be floated next year. Meanwhile, the head of the Agricultural Marketing Organisation said that low supply and high demand for produce are behind the price rises in the market (Sawt Al Shabab).

The storage capacity of the dams in the Kingdom is only 140 million cubic metres. The volume is only three per cent of the amount of the average rainfall the country receives each year (Sawt Al Shabab).

A new income tax directorate for east Amman has been opened to serve residents of northern and southern Marka, Jabal Al Nasr, Nadi Al Sibaq, the Alia quarter, Hamla, Al Yarmouk, northern and southern Hashemi and Al Mahata. The Income Tax Directorate for South Amman has become the new name of the directorate which previously had the name of "East Amman" (Al Ra'i).

The daily average of water consumption during summer months amounts to 300,000 cubic metres.

The Amman Chamber of Industry will organise a seminar from Jan. 22 to Jan. 24/1995 to expand the awareness on the benefits granted to Jordanian exports by countries applying the generalised preferential system. The seminar, organised in cooperation with UNCTAD and the Italian government, will explain the methods of export to the U.S., Japan and Italy (Al Dustour).

The technical committees at the Jordan Electricity Authority, in cooperation with foreign consultants, are continuing reviews of tendered offers for the second phase of the Aqaba Thermal Power Project which will cost about \$200 million (Al Dustour).

Royal Jordanian will soon be putting small aircraft on its Amman-Aqaba flights as well as flights to and from Amman, Al Gharraqah, Beirut and Damascus (Al Dustour).

GCC airlines look to unified cargo handling rate

DUBAI (R) — Arab Gulf cargo carriers hope to eventually unify cargo handling rates, a representative of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) air cargo committee has said.

"We are working on a unified tariff for cargo handling at the various GCC airports," cargo operations manager at Dubai government-owned airline Emirates, Mohammad Matar said.

"The problem is that different airports have different facilities and thus charge different rates. The plan is in its infancy at the moment," he added.

Mr. Matar was speaking to Reuters in an interview after a GCC air cargo committee meeting which ended in Dubai.

He said representatives of four of six GCC national carriers — Saudi, Kuwait Airways, Gulf Air and Emirates — and a GCC general secretariat member were present at two-day conference. Newly-established Oman Airways and Qatar Airways were not represented at the meeting.

Asked whether the recently-introduced equation cargo community system, developed by Emirates and its sister company Dnata to automate cargo data transmission, would be implemented throughout the GCC, he said "if others are interested we'd be happy for them to use it."

He said most GCC countries used the CITA FAST IV system for cargo reservations.

"We don't want to replace it, but we're always on the lookout for other systems which can be cost effective and give us what we want."

"Ultimately we look for

standardising different procedures and equipment," he pointed out.

Mr. Matar said the group was committed to improving information flows between carriers and improving GCC airline relations. At the meeting, the policy of giving preference to other GCC carriers when dealing in air space, was reiterated.

"We decided that whenever possible and feasible from an economic point of view, we will give preference to GCC carriers," he said.

The group was also considering a number of cargo reservation systems for installation globe-wide.

"We are looking at various reservation systems to see whether they're suitable," he said.

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"We don't want to replace it, but we

Senator tells baseball owners to deal

WASHINGTON (R) — Major League Baseball players and owners, under threat of a midnight Thursday deadline set by the owners, resumed talks Tuesday in a bid to settle the longest stoppage in U.S. sports history.

An added twist to the talks was a key Republican senator's warning to the owners not to try to break the Players' Union.

"If I get the impression that the owners are going to break the players' union, then I'm not going to sit idly by and let that go," Senator Orrin Hatch told ESPN, the sports television network.

Hatch is the incoming Republican chairman of the powerful Senate Judiciary Committee, which can rewrite laws that exempt baseball from monopoly regulations.

The owners voted, 25-3, last Thursday to declare an impasse in their negotiations with the Players Association but decided to delay implementing their final offer, including a salary cap and elimination of salary arbitration, both bitterly opposed by the players.

If the owners impose New York rules, the players are expected to file an unfair labour practice charge with the national labour relations board and seek an injunction to prevent implementation of the cap, claiming the owners did not bargain in good faith.

Hatch's comments appeared to signal a more activist attitude of the incoming Republican majority which takes over next month.

President Bill Clinton and the Democrats who lost control of the Congress in the November elections have essentially stayed away from the baseball dispute.

"It's time to make a deal if we want one," Jerry Norris, an owner of the Colorado Rockies said as he arrived for the talks. "There are ways to settle this."

World Cup opportunity lost for U.S. soccer

WASHINGTON (AFP) — American organizers provided a first-rate World Cup this year, but then squandered a golden opportunity to capitalize on the unprecedented interest with an elite U.S. League.

The 24-team championship played to 3.5 million spectators in nine cities, providing front-page news and commanding major television attention.

Even golf and baseball were overshadowed by the exploits of Brazil, Italy and others.

But the memories have faded quickly. Football is rarely mentioned now that basketball and American football season are well under way.

Even baseball and hockey shutdowns did not create room for football because no U.S. league was there to fill the void. FIFA-backed Major League Soccer (MLS), run by World Cup chairman Alan Rothenberg, was put on hold until April of 1996, the same month a new U.S. baseball league plans to start.

"Nobody could have predicted the situation the U.S. sports community is in now," U.S. World Cup defender Alexi Lalas said.

"I'm still very optimistic. But just from what I've been hearing, there's so much negative energy. Organizers are going against a country of other sports."

Rothenberg went from the World Cup to surviving a political fight to remain president of the U.S. Soccer Federation. U.S. indoor and outdoor low-level leagues fought against Rothenberg, who won with support of youth football leaders.

Critics said Rothenberg should not be running the league and the U.S. organization, saying others could have had a league ready for next April as had been projected.

Rothenberg said MLS would keep the momentum of the World Cup, then announced the delay until 1996, ending any

hope of lingering support from the world's most popular sports event on a skeptical U.S. audience.

FIFA gave a letter of support, but their goal of a U.S. league in place after the World Cup went unfulfilled.

"Like a fine wine, you only open it when it is ready," said Stu Subotnick, owner of the MLS team in the New York area.

"We've looked at some of the mistakes that were made in the past and we wanted to make sure they didn't happen again. Soccer has been an orphan in our country too long. We want it to last for centuries."

Pele had similar dreams 20 years ago when he played in the North American Soccer League (NASL), which died a decade ago.

"The failure of the NASL scared off a lot of potential investors," said Marc Rapaport, the owner of a Los Angeles MLS team.

"The World Cup showed maybe things have changed."

Rothenberg promises several international matches in MLS markets in 1995 to sustain interest, but two of the league's 10 debut cities have not even been decided yet.

Plans to start with 12 clubs died for lack of financial support and some advertisers have already been alienated.

A brewing company was unhappy that Rothenberg briefly sought a beer ban at World Cup matches. A credit card firm sued when organizers violated their exclusivity contract by allowing phone sponsors to produce World Cup billing cards. No shoe or clothes maker would pay two million dollars to be the sole MLS suppliers.

A plan to limit salaries to \$1.3 million has been criticised by players as too little to attract the top players. U.S. fans would demand plans to experiment with rule changes also bring worries.

China committed to anti-doping campaign

BEIJING (R) — China said Wednesday its suspension of 11 athletes found to have used banned drugs demonstrates its vigilance against doping in sport.

"Absolute opposition to the use of performance-enhancing drugs is the resolute position of China's sports world," the official China Sports Daily said in a front-page commentary.

Chinese officials have denied international allegations of systematic doping.

China Tuesday announced the suspension of 11 top competitors, including seven swimmers, for up to four years after they tested positive for banned drugs at October's Asian Games in Hiroshima.

The Olympic Council of Asia stripped the 11 of their Asian Games medals after their urine samples showed traces of the banned anabolic steroid dehydrotestosterone.

"This news aroused top-level attention in the Chinese Olympic Committee the minute it arrived," the newspaper said.

"Along with the sincere inquiry and strict handling, all kinds of effective measures are being implemented to deepen the unwavering struggle against the use of performance-enhancing drugs."

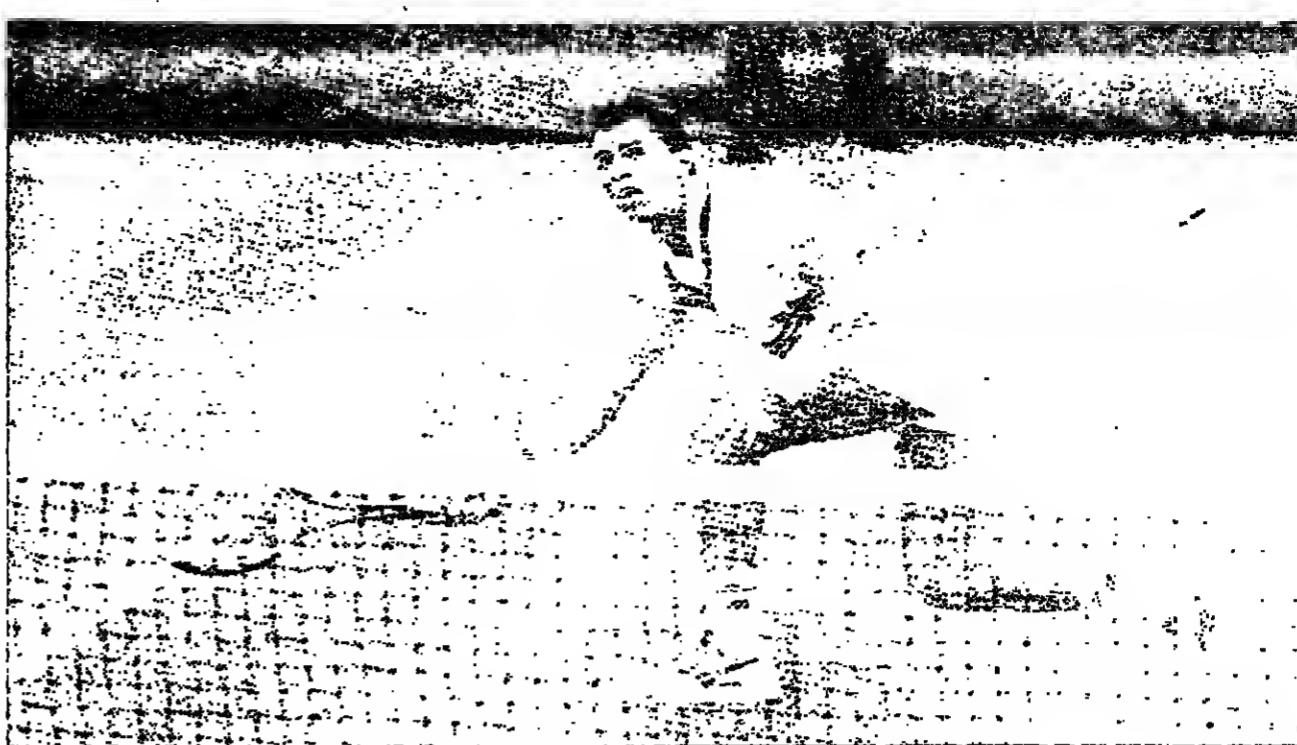
The suspensions accorded with standard penalties adopted by world swimming's governing body FINA and

other international federations.

World champions Yang Aihua and Lu Bin and fellow woman swimmer Zhou Guanbin as well as men swimmers Xiong Guomin, Hu Bin, Zhang Bin and Fu Yong have all been suspended for two years.

The Chinese Track and Field Association banned hurdler Han Qing, a woman, for four years.

Canoeists Zhang Lei and Qiu Suoren, both men, were banned for two years by the Chinese Canoe Association and cyclist Wang Yan, a woman, was banned for six months by the Chinese Cycling Association, China Sports Daily said.



Ivan Lendl

Ivan Lendl announces retirement

NEW YORK (AFP) — Ivan Lendl, one of the most successful tennis players of all time, announced the end of his career on Tuesday, after a long-running struggle against a back problem.

"It's a very difficult and sad time for me and not the way I would have chosen to retire," the Czech-born American said in a telephone conference call.

"I enjoyed playing the game, had a lot of great times, and I will miss it," Lendl, who held the world number one spot for a record 270 weeks — 157 of them consecutive, has reached his decision after being told by his doctor that his back was not going to improve.

He dropped out of the top 10 last year for the first time since he started on the professional tour in 1979, and has been unable to rediscover his old form. He has slipped to 54th in the current rankings.

His only disappointment in the Grand Slam series is to have never won the big one, Wimbledon, although he was a losing finalist in those two magical years of 1986 and 1990.

More recently, his victories have been thin on the

ground.

Lendl won only two tournaments in 1993 (Munich and the Tokyo indoor), and failed to win any this year — the first time he had failed to win any silverware since winning his first Lendl.

Lendl, who was born on March 7, 1960, was introduced to the game at a very early age by his father, Jiri, a lawyer who was once 15th in Czechoslovakia's rankings, and his mother, Olga, a former national number three.

He notched that debut ATP victory at Houston on clay, reached his first Grand Slam final the following year, losing the French Open to Swedish legend Bjorn Borg, and was world number one for the first time by 1983.

Moving Stateside, he set up home in Connecticut in 1984 and obtained U.S. nationality in 1992.

Outside his playing career, Lendl is a keen art collector — he has the world's largest collection of posters by turn-of-the-century Czech artist Alphonse Mucha — and owns a sports management company.

After finishing in the top 10 for 13 consecutive years, a

feat bettered only by American Jimmy Connors (16 years), Lendl amassed a total of 94 Tour titles.

His invincibility in the early 1980s was among the greatest that the sport has ever witnessed, thanks partly to coach Tony Roche, who turned him from a quiet, precise baseliner to a tenacious athlete with a booming forehand.

He retains two formidable winning streaks from the period — 44 matches from October 1981 to February 1982 and 66 indoor matches from October 1981 to January 1983.

Year-end rankings

1978 — 75

1979 — 29

1980 — 6

1981 — 2

1982 — 3

1983 — 2

1984 — 3

1985 — 1

1986 — 1

1987 — 1

1988 — 2

1989 — 1

1990 — 3

1991 — 5

1992 — 8

1993 — 19

1994 — 54

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6	7	8	9	10	11	12	
13	14	15	16	17	18	19	
20	21	22	23	24	25	26	
27	28	29	30	31	32		

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Jordan recovered foreign exchange reserves — Nabulsi

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Central Bank of Jordan (CBJ) Governor Mohammad Nabulsi has said that Jordan's economic performance was good during 1994 and that the Kingdom had managed to increase its foreign exchange reserves after a decline that was seen during the first half of the year.

Dr. Nabulsi, in an interview broadcast on Jordan Television Tuesday night, said the CBJ believed that Jordan did not need any more commercial banks, local or foreign. However, this did not mean that the CBJ was un receptive to new ideas. He said banks specialised in certain sectors of the economy — export financing for instance — were welcome.

The CBJ governor said Jordan's foreign exchange reserves now stood at more than \$600 million, the highest since the beginning of the year. The reserves dropped by more than \$300 million in the first six months of the year as a result of a decline in expatriate remittances and a higher demand for foreign currency.

In earlier comments, Dr. Nabulsi has said that the CBJ had found that the so-called flow of foreign currency from Jordan across the River Jordan to the West Bank in return for Jordanian dinars was negligible, at around \$5 million per month, and that this was not the cause of the plunge in reserves as was suggested in some reports.

Dr. Nabulsi said Tuesday that the CBJ had not adopted any specific stand on Israeli commercial banks that might seek to set up operations in Jordan. He said Israeli commercial banks would be treated the same way as foreign banks that operate in the Kingdom and the same banking regulations and rules would apply to them.

On the possibility of the Israeli shekel entering the foreign exchange market in Jordan, Dr. Nabulsi noted that it was not the CBJ's policy to specify the currencies that Jordanian moneychangers could deal in and that it was up to exchange houses themselves to decide whether they wanted to deal in the Israeli currency.

However, he noted, banks in Jordan deal mainly in four or five main foreign currencies and therefore trading in any other currency was rare, if not non-existent.

Dr. Nabulsi said the CBJ had to resort to "shock treatment" when it found that credit facilities extended by commercial banks increased by about 20 per cent in 1993 over 1992.

The increase went beyond the ceiling set by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) in the economic restructuring programme being implemented by Jordan. Even without the programme, Jordanian monetary policymakers have been applying brakes on the growth of credit facilities in a move to contain inflation.

Dr. Nabulsi said the "shock treatment" adopted by the Central Bank involved raising the interest rate it offered to depositors. The raise was between 2.5 and three per cent on deposits while interest rates for borrowers went by between one and 1.5 per cent. These moves curbed credit, squeezed the profit margin of commercial banks and contributed to the stability of the dinar, the Central Bank governor said.

Egypt and Israel vow to boost peace

CAIRO (Agencies) — Egypt and Israel said Wednesday they would seize the "golden opportunity" to boost peace in the Middle East at the end of the first official visit here by Israeli President Ezer Weizman.

In a joint statement Mr. Weizman and Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak — said they had faith in "the good prospects for a just and global peace based on resolutions taken by the United Nations."

"Whatever the circumstances we must not miss the current golden opportunity to spread peace in the Middle East."

Mr. Weizman, who was on his first official visit as Israeli head of state in a bid to rekindle relations with Egypt which have remained cool despite their 1979 peace treaty, held further talks with Mr. Mubarak on Wednesday before leaving Cairo.

"Peace between Egypt and Israel is part of the global peace in the region and should act as an example of cohabitation and reconciliation between the Arabs and Israel," they said.

Egypt was initially isolated by the Arab World after it became the first Arab country to make peace with Israel. But accords between Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO), and the Jewish state and Jordan have heralded a new era in the region.

The two leaders stressed the "prime importance of making progress without any delay on the path to peace and express their hopes of overcoming the obstacles which are hindering Israel-PLO negotiations and Israeli-Syrian talks."

Meanwhile, Mr. Mubarak told Israeli television late Tuesday that any future visit to Israel did not "present any problems."

Mr. Mubarak has never visited Israel since his election in 1981.

Foreign Minister Amr Mussa said in an interview with the daily Al Ahram on Wednesday that a visit by Mr. Mubarak to Israel was "closer than ever."

"I don't see any problems in coming to Israel and I don't need for that a preparatory visit to Cairo by my Israeli counterpart," Mr. Mubarak told Israeli television.

Subversion trial verdict

A MAN lies on the ground outside the State Security Court in Amman on Wednesday after fainting upon hearing that one of his relatives has been sentenced to death among 11 in a trial of 25 people, 18 of whom were found guilty of subversion, carrying out bomb attacks and illegally possessing arms and explosives (see story on page one) (photo by Yousef Allan)



456 Israeli tour operators visit Aqaba, Petra to explore business possibilities

By Rana Husseini
Special to the Jordan Times

PETRA — A group of nearly 500 Israeli tour operators paid a one-day visit to Jordan on Wednesday as part of joint Jordanian-Israeli efforts to develop joint tourism packages following the signing of their peace treaty on Oct. 26.

The group of 456 tour operators, which visited Aqaba and Petra, was the first such team to come to the Kingdom, which has signed an accord with Israel to offer joint packages to American tourists.

Such packages would include the ancient city of Petra but with clear plans to preserve the ruins at the rose-red Nabataean city, said Ghassan Mifreh, secretary-general of

the Ministry of Tourism.

"We have discussed future plans with the Israeli ministry of tourism and our focus will be on preserving Petra," Mr. Mifreh told the Jordan Times. The ministry has set aside an allocation for the project and intends to announce the details "sometime next week," he said.

Eli Gonen, Mr. Mifreh's Israeli counterpart, expressed the optimism behind the Israeli team's visit to Jordan, particularly Petra, a magnet for Israeli tourists.

"Petra is a wonderful sight and unique. It is one of the most important sights in the world," Mr. Gonen said. "I think it was a very important visit that can promote and increase the number of Israeli tourists coming to Jordan."

Mr. Gonen told the Jordan Times he was also optimistic that Jordan and Israel could successfully market joint tour packages.

"This is the second time I come to Petra and I am very optimistic about the group's visit, and hope that the visit will give a good impression and encourage more Israeli tourists to visit the country," said Alon Yerushalmi, representative of the Galilee Tours Company which organised the event.

"People are very kind here and they understand the importance of tourism and try to provide good service," Mr. Yerushalmi told the Jordan Times.

Arwa Hijazin of the Tycbe Tours and Travels, the company which coordinated the Israeli team's visit with Galilee Tours, said:

"It was a very successful trip and we hope that it will promote tourism to Jordan in the upcoming years."

Weather forecast to improve next week

AMMAN (J.T.) — Ali Abanda, head of the Department of Meteorology, Wednesday said that the weather was expected to be moderate and relatively warm in the coming few days following the snowstorms and heavy rains of this week.

In a statement carried by the Jordan News Agency, Petra, Dr. Abanda said, however, Friday marks the beginning of the 40 days of winter which witness the heaviest rains.

The Department of Meteorology said that there would be no change in the weather conditions until Sunday, with temperatures rising to 12 degrees but warned of frost formations Thursday and Friday nights.

Dr. Abanda said that the recent rainfalls were excellent in all regions, exceeding in some cases 200 per cent of the average rainfall for this period of the year and accounting for around 70 to 80 per cent of the annual average in Jordan.

Hashem Shboul, secretary general of the Jordan Valley Authority (JVA), said the rains had replenished the King Talal Dam by eight million cubic metres (MCM) of water.

He told Petra that the reservoir behind the King Talal Dam, which has a capacity of 75 MCMs, now contains 58 cms of rain water.

The Wadi Sheib and Kafrein dams are full, the Wadi Al Arab dam has 7.9 MCMs of water out of storage capacity of 17.1 MCMs and the Sharshabil Ben Hasneh Dam has 2.3 MCMs out of a capacity of 3.9 MCMs, said Mr. Shboul.

Water and Irrigation Minister Saleh Israheil said Tuesday that the government was planning to build as many dams as possible in order to collect rain and flood water to cater to the country's expected growing needs of water.

Students demonstrate in Bahrain; rights group faults government

NICOSIA (AFP) — Hundreds of students demonstrated Wednesday in the Bahraini capital as a U.S.-based human rights group accused the Gulf state of using excessive force and making arbitrary arrests to crush Shiite protests.

The students, including girls in veils, rallied at Bahrain University to protest the killing of a Shiite Muslim student and classes were suspended, a professor told AFP on condition his name not be used.

Security forces in the Gulf state did not intervene.

Meanwhile Shiite demonstrators in three neighbourhoods of Manama "put up barricades to prevent security forces from entering," an Arab diplomat in Bahrain contacted from Nicosia said Wednesday.

The communities were Al Khamis and Draz in the south and Sanabis in the west.

Manama residents also reported bearing sporadic gunfire coming from Shiite neighbourhoods of the capital.

In a letter to the editor of Bahrain, Isa Ben Salman Al

Salman on Tuesday evening and Wednesday morning.

"Small bands of Shiites are still clashing with security forces and throwing stones at police," who are armed with assault rifles and tear-gas, a resident said.

"Tension is still high in several areas of the country" and anti-not police deployed just outside Shiite neighbourhoods are watching Shiite groups around the clock, the resident added.

According to the opposition in exile, nine people have died in clashes since last week.

The authorities in Manama, which has hosted a summit of Gulf Arab leaders since Monday, have only acknowledged one policeman killed.

Several religious figures abroad and the Washington-based Human Rights Watch Middle East on Wednesday condemned the government crackdown, while Egypt accused Iran of trying to spread "Shiite doctrine by force."

In a letter to the editor of Bahrain, Isa Ben Salman Al

Khalifa, Human Rights Watch condemned the "indiscriminate use of lethal force against peaceful demonstrations" and the "collective punishment of whole villages."

And it said there had been "an arbitrary roundup of scores of suspected political activists," without giving an exact number, according to a copy of the letter obtained by AFP.

Violence erupted in Bahrain last week when hundreds of Shiites held protest to demand the release of Shiite cleric Sheikh Ali Salman, arrested after calling for the restoration of parliament, suspended in 1975.

Diplomatic sources in Manama have said 1,600 people have been detained in a wave of arrests in the capital as well as towns and villages with large Shiite communities in the Sunni-led state.

The opposition Islamic Front for the Liberation of Bahrain (IFLB) said from

(Continued on page 7)

Dean Rusk dies at 85

ATHENS, Georgia (AP) — Dean Rusk, who was secretary of state under presidents Kennedy and Johnson helped enforce the cold war containment of communism with the Bay of Pigs invasion and the Vietnam war, has died.

Rusk, the son of a poor Georgia farmer who became the nation's highest cabinet officer, died Tuesday night at his home in Athens, the University of Georgia said Wednesday. He taught at the university's law school after leaving Washington in 1969 and had been in declining health for several years.

Rusk was appointed secretary of state by President John F. Kennedy in 1961. After Kennedy was assassinated in 1963, President Lyndon Johnson insisted Rusk remain secretary until the end of Johnson's term in 1969, despite criticism for Vietnam.

In those eight years, Rusk presided over four major global events: The Bay of Pigs, the Cuban missile crisis, the signing of a nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty with the Soviet Union and the Vietnam war.

Rusk supported Johnson's policy on Vietnam so strongly that he became a favorite target of anti-war lawmakers and student protesters. Even his son, Richard, called his father "an architect of a war that killed 58,000 Americans and nearly a million Vietnamese."

When he sensed that Khrushchev had begun to back down, Rusk summed it up with his quotation: "We're standing eyeball to eyeball, and the other fellow just blinked."

Ben Baz says peace with Israel possible

RIYADH (AFP) — Saudi Arabia's highest religious authority for the first time on Wednesday said peace was possible between Arabs and Israelis as it was not against the teachings of Islam.

The country's mufti, Sheikh Abdul Aziz Ben Baz, said in an interview to be published in the Saudi weekly Al-Muslimoon that "a permanent or temporary ceasefire with the enemy is tolerated, if rulers see an interest in it."

"But it can be broken if the need disappears," added the mufti who heads the country's highest religious body, the Council of Ulema, which wields a large influence over state policies.

The mufti, who was questioned on the Israel-Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) autonomy deal and the Jordan-Israel peace treaty, added that he was also not opposed to Muslims visiting holy sites in occupied Arab East Jerusalem.

"Visiting Al Aqsa Mosque as much as possible is a tradition from the Prophet Mohammad," he said in the interview to be published Friday, a copy of which was received by AFP.

The mufti, who was condemned by the Israel-Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) autonomy deal and the Jordan-Israel peace treaty, added that he was also not opposed to Muslims visiting holy sites in occupied Arab East Jerusalem.

"Jerusalem is the third holiest site in Islam after Mecca and Medina in Saudi Arabia."

Since the June 1967 Arab-

Israel, 12 Arab states reach pact to reduce tensions

WASHINGTON (AP) —

Israel and 12 Arab countries have reached agreement on two measures designed to reduce Mideast tensions, U.S. official has said.

One provides for advance notification of exercises involving more than 4,000 troops or 10 tanks. The other calls for exchanging military information.

Fred Axelgard, the State Department official who oversaw the agreements reached last week in Tunisia, said Tuesday that the refusal of Syria and Lebanon to participate minimises their importance.

Still, he called the agreement "very significant" in confidence-building between old adversaries.

The talks were held as part of the Middle East peace process that has produced a treaty between Israel and Jordan and agreements on Palestinian self-rule between Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO).

The 12 Arab countries agreeing to the tension-reducing steps are Algeria, Bahrain, Egypt, Jordan, Kuwait, Morocco, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Tunisia, the United Arab Emirates and Yemen. A Palestinian delegation also approved the measures.

Egypt, meanwhile, is demanding that the Middle East be established as a nuclear-free zone and that Israel open its nuclear facilities. Israel is widely suspected of having either developed or having the technical to produce nuclear weapons.

The Egyptian drive drew a sharp response Tuesday from Moshe Katriel, a former Israeli defence and foreign minister who spoke to the Washington Institute for Near East Policy, a private research group.

He said Egypt seemed to be looking for something to argue about. "It's just a sick to beat Israel with," Mr. Arens said.

"I've been disappointed and surprised."

Egypt is expected to step up its campaign next spring when the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty is up for review. Israel has refused to sign the accord, which calls for international inspection of suspect facilities.

The treaty has been extended in five-year intervals, but Secretary of State Warren Christopher said from the Clinton administration would push for an indefinite extension.

COLUMN

Dutch prince' condition improves

THE HAGUE (AFP) — The health of the Netherlands' ailing Prince Bernhard improved slightly Tuesday, but doctors warned against over-optimism, the Dutch Royal Information Service said. The 83-year-old prince, father of Queen Beatrix, has a pulmonary infection following an operation on Nov. 26 for a colonic tumour in a Utrecht hospital. Doctors have taken the prince off sedatives, hoping this will speed up his recovery, but he was being placed on an artificial respirator, the information service said. He was visited yesterday by his wife, the former Queen Juliana.

PHILIPPINE abductors free ex-official's daughter

MANILA (R) — Kidnappers have freed the 20-year-old daughter of a former Philippine Central Bank governor without a ransom being paid, her father said Wednesday. Jaime Laya, also a former minister of education and finance, told a Manila radio station his daughter Sandra had been freed Tuesday night at a bus station in Olongapo, north of the capital. She was kidnapped in Manila Thursday on her way to the University of the Philippines, where she is a third-year business administration student. Mr. Laya told the radio station Sandra had telephoned him Friday to say the kidnappers wanted a five million peso ransom (over \$200,000). She called again Tuesday night to say she had been set free. No ransom was paid.

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